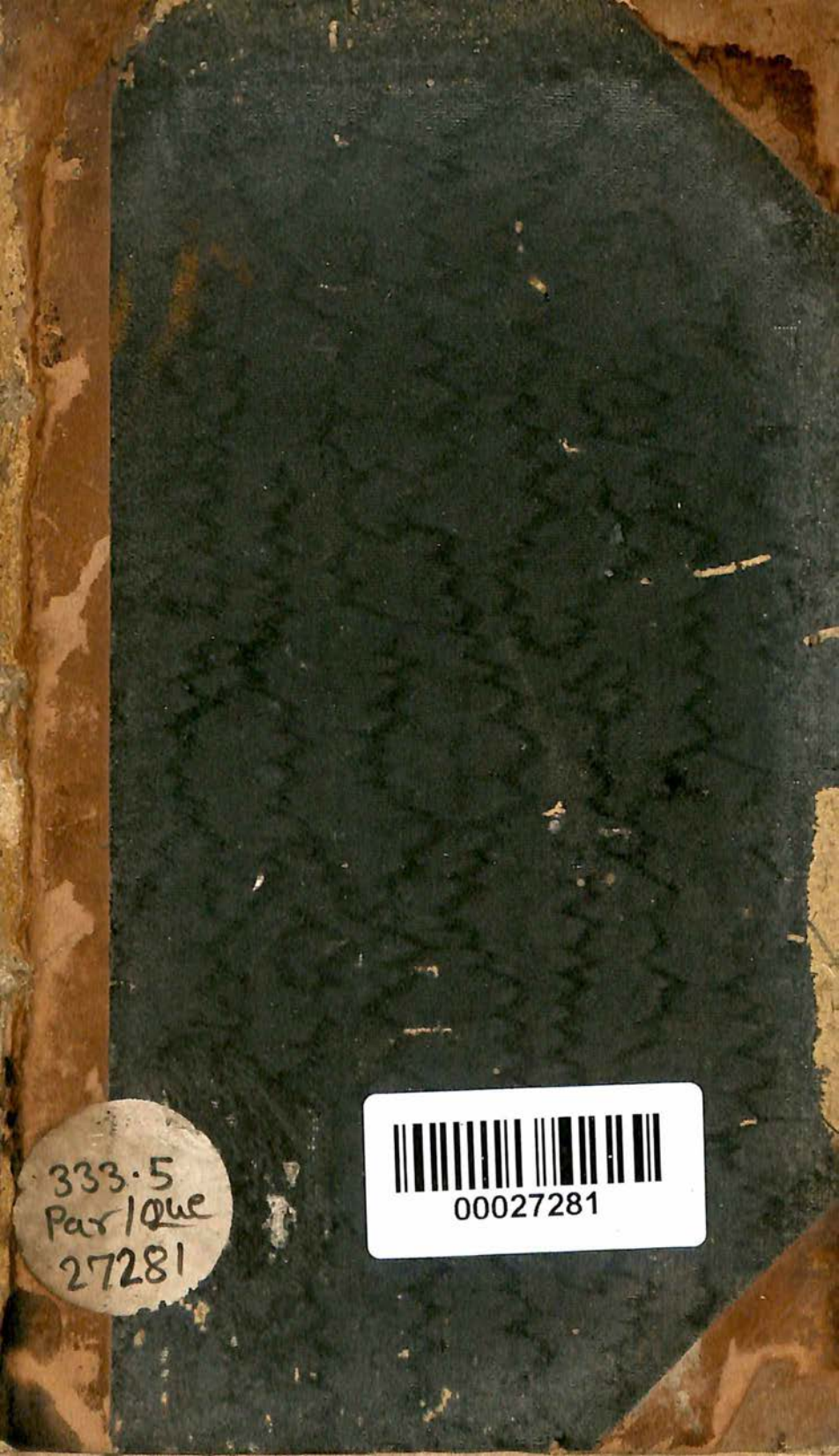
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THE

QUESTION

OF THE

NECESSITY OF THE EXISTING

CORN LAWS,

CONSIDERED,

IN THEIR RELATION TO

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER, THE TENANTRY, THE LANDHOLDER, AND THE COUNTRY.

BY

CHARLES HENRY PARRY, M.D.
F.R.S. &c.

"Is it not wiser to reflect, what remedy may be adopted, at once more general "in its principles, and more comprehensive in its object, less excep- "tionable in its example, and less dangerous in its application?"
Mr. Pitt.—Speech for the Relief of the Poor.

PRINTED BY
RICHARD CRUTTWELL, ST. JAMES'S-STREET, BATH;
AND SOLD BY
LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWNE, PATER-NOSTER-ROW, LONDON.
1816.

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PREFACE.

THE following Essay was written in the Summer of last year, (1815,) when its subject attracted universal attention and interest. The delay in its publication has chiefly arisen from the impossibility of procuring official information on a topic essential to its right comprehension,—the real amount of importation during the year, which immediately preceded the legislative regulations in respect to foreign corn.

If, in consequence of this delay, the merit of accurate prediction has been superseded by the course of events, the author has, at least, been spared the disgrace of unwarrantable assertion and illegitimate inference; and in offering himself to the public at this late period, rests his excuse on the almost inexhaustible nature of the subject, and

the hope, that, by having collected into a single point of view many scattered opinions, he may assist the future solution of one of the most difficult problems of political œconomy.

The extreme intricacy of the present question, in a national connection, is, indeed, manifested not only by the great number of discussions, to which this interesting and important subject has given rise; not only by the great discrepance of opinion, which exists among different authors professing the same object, but, in a more striking manner, by the frequent contradictions, which may be detected in the opinions of the same author, however able, and however unprejudiced, he may be.

The whole subject of the Corn Laws naturally divides itself into two parts: first, the necessity for an additional bounty, as a protection to the agricultural interests and the independence of the country; secondly, the advantage of a trade, comparatively free, to the remaining classes of the community, and to the progress of national prosperity. If, however, it can be shewn, that the necessity for fresh restrictions has not been proved,

and that the independence of the country may be attained, even under the same limitations to importation, which have existed ever since the year 1804, the main argument for restrictions is set aside, and any farther consideration becomes superfluous. To this part alone of the subject the Author has, on the present occasion, directed his attention. His arguments are principally addressed to those, who, ascribing to a single cause, effects, which seem rather attributable to a multiplicity of causes, found, on this opinion, the defence of a legislative enactment, unlimited as to period, unqualified as to its object, and of universal influence. He wishes to shew, that, independently of the mischiefs, which always result from the interference of Government in matters relating to the subsistence of a people, the attempt to establish a permanent price for home production, at a standard above that of the rest of Europe, is not justified by any assumed condition of the country, or required by the supposed necessity of raising an independent supply.

ERRATA.

Page 71, l. 13, 14, dele " " inverted commas.

125, l. 1, after " likely," dele), and insert after " years."

138, l. 20, for 21s. 10d read 24s. 10d.

139, l. 11, after " 1765," for " export" read " bounty on export;" and

l. 12, add " which commenced in 1767. "

N. B. By correcting this erratum, and taking the prices from 1768 to 1772 inclusive, the case becomes much stronger.

176, l. 14, for " that at eight acres" read " that eight acres."

Notes.—Page 206, last line, after " produce," add " Globe, April 10, 1816."

CHAP. I.

ON RENT.

THE question of the necessity for additional restrictions on the importation of foreign corn is defended chiefly by the supposed difficulties, which a contrary system would entail upon the landed and agricultural interests of the country, and by the obstacle to national independence, which would arise out of the consequent diminution of cultivation. These popular arguments I shall consider at some length.

There are, however, two abstract principles, which have been supposed unfavourable to a comparatively unlimited admission of foreign corn, and the brief consideration of which is indispensable, previously to a discussion of the more immediate subject. These are, the rise and progress of rents, and the connection between the price of corn, and that of labour, and other commodities. The importance of high price, and its connection with corn regulations, are the objects, for which it has been attempted to establish the first principle. The necessity

for high price, in order to prevent the injury, to which the agriculturist must be subject under a reduction of the price of corn, and the stationary condition and continued dearness of labour and other commodities, is the object for which the second principle has been advanced. The object of both is high price; and the means recommended have been the new tax on importation.

In determining the disputed point, whether, in a season of peculiar difficulty to the tenant, it is equitable that the landlord should assist him by some reduction of his rent, a question of a two-fold nature arises for our consideration. First, what is the essential quality of rent, under natural circumstances? Secondly, what is the actual relative situation of landlord and tenant? The latter subject I shall at present defer.

Of the first we have been favoured with a masterly analysis by the hand of a distinguished writer, Mr. MALTHUS; whose opinions always deserve attention, and at this particular moment, from the influence which a deference to such authority might have upon practical as well as theoretical conclusions, peculiarly demand examination. This gentleman has submitted to the public an Essay on the Nature of Rent, and the Laws by which its Rise and Progress are governed. As a general remark, it may be objected to this able work, that it does not appear sufficiently expanded in its application to the circumstances of the times; and it may be doubted, whether the inferences deduced from his system can with safety be adopted as practical guides in our reasonings on the important question before us, under the actual situation of affairs.

According to Mr. MALTHUS, the Rent of Land is "that "portion of the value of the whole produce, which re- "mains to the owner of the land after all the outgoings "belonging to its cultivation, of whatever kind, have been "paid, including the profits of the capital employed, esti- "mated according to the usual and ordinary rate of the "profits of agricultural stock at the time being. The imme- "diate cause of rent, then, is obviously the excess of price "above the cost of production, at which raw produce sells "in the market." Again, the Causes of High Price are stated to be three. "First and mainly, that quality of "the earth by which it can be made to yield a greater "portion of the necessaries of life, than is required for the "maintenance of the persons employed on the land. "Secondly, that quality peculiar to the necessaries of life, "of being able to create their own demand, or to raise up "a number of demanders in proportion to the quantity "of necessaries produced. And, thirdly, the comparative "scarcity of the most fertile land." It may be remarked, however, that admitting the general principle, that excess of price above the cost of production enables the tenant to pay his rent, and that excess of price may generally be attributed to the causes assigned by this intelligent author, all the consequences are not deduced from this exposition, which it is of primary importance to comprehend under it; and the exceptions to the general law, in their minute and immediate reference to the corn question, are carefully withheld. There is an apparent attempt to force us into conclusions, which seem necessarily to involve the conviction, that the free importation of corn, by occasion-

ing cheapness, is as injurious as the author wishes to prove high prices and high rents to be beneficial. There can be but this inference from the studied connection of the two subjects; and yet, from Mr. MALTHUS's arguments, it is not quite evident that the natural law has, in our artificial and unnatural situation, an important operative influence; or that the exceptions have not a much greater share in the production of certain mischievous effects, than he is disposed to allow.

We may, however, still farther observe, that the separation of rent under supposed natural circumstances seems, notwithstanding some excellent illustrations, to be in a great measure, if not wholly, an arbitrary separation; and, in the progress of society, to be dependent on various accidental occurrences, unconnected with exact proportion to a natural excess in the price of raw produce. It therefore leads to no certain practical conclusions. The price of raw produce seems, in the first instance, to have no available distinguishing characteristic from the prices occasioned by a monopoly, and, on many subsequent occasions, appears to be affected by causes external to the article itself; so that it can scarcely be established as a rule in estimating the fairness of rents. Neither of these circumstances, then, is so necessarily connected with existing wealth and increasing population, that these evidences of national prosperity can never exist without them.

It is, in fact, of little practical use to us, either in reasoning upon a subject like the present, or in determining the fairness of rents, to say, that rent is whatever remains after the whole cost of production, including the

profits of stock, has been deducted. In order to determine equitably as to the amount of rent, we must know with precision what is really excess. Besides a very nice adjustment of other particulars, we must possess a very accurate analysis of the profits of stock, before we can determine how much of the price of raw produce resolves itself into this part of the expense of production, and, consequently, what is the neat profit from which rent is to be derived. The profits, which, under the complicated circumstances of each particular property, equitably belong to the cultivator, must be ascertained with an exact measure, before any surplus can be deducted as rent. But at the period when rent is supposed naturally to commence, the profits of stock must be a very indefinite quantity, varying in almost every separate instance.

When "fertile land is in abundance, and may be had by "whoever asks for it, when nobody, of course, will pay a "rent to a landlord;" the amount of population is supposed to be far below the means of subsistence, and the wealth to be pretty equally divided. But the period at which, according to this theory, rent commences its separation from profits, is when, in the progressive state of society, a comparative scarcity of fertile land takes place. This scarcity supposes an increasing population, and great inequalities arising from the nature of the soil, and other accidents, in the power of obtaining an excess. Individuals may subsist by the cultivation of the inferior soils, even though the excess should but just go beyond their expenses. In this case, the separation of rent has not yet taken place; but would it be an equitable proceeding

to either party, to employ a compulsory average upon this great inequality, and to call the medium between these two extremes, the ordinary profit of stock?

That the profits of stock have nothing determinable in their relation to the whole individual receipt, seems very evident. "They are," says ADAM SMITH, "so very fluc-"tuating, that a person cannot always tell what is the "average of his annual profits. They vary, not only "from year to year, but from day to day, and almost "from hour to hour." Their determinable nature can only refer to the aggregate amount of accumulated stock, and its division among various competitors; and as the duration at a certain point is the only determinable quality, and as this is not essential but accidental, the profits of stock can have no specific and assignable connection with rent. It seems highly probable, that, even this relation, as a permanent and applicable relation, has been founded on the marketable value of money alone. ADAM SMITH has, indeed, taken his whole illustration from this article of commerce.

In considering, however, what there is essential in profits of stock as one of the expenses of production, by the separation of which the specific relation of rent may be established, we must revert to a period, when neither this, nor any other, universal standard can have existed. The instance in which particular portions of land are supposed to yield 30 per cent. on the capital employed, (which per centage is, however, not to be considered as profits of stock, because other lands return only 20 per cent.) seems an arbitrary separation, not essential to the nature

of the case. In fixing this average, the commodity produced at most expense on the inferior lands will attain the price of produce on the rich lands, which are most numerous; but why should the power of the cultivator of the latter be at once abridged, as far as the application of fresh capital to the land goes, in order that a portion of his surplus may be set aside under a new denomination? To the last cultivator it is certainly the same thing, whether he pays £10 for the use of the rich land, or cultivates the inferior soil. To the direct progress of improved cultivation it may, however, be a very different thing.

If, then, the estimate of profits of stock be thus loose and indefinite, what precise character can exist in rent itself, as regulated by this standard?

According to the system before us, the profits of stock must have considerably fallen, before any rent can appear. To this end, a great increase of wealth and population, a fall of wages, and scarcity of fertile land, are necessary. It might, however, more reasonably be imagined, that during the abundance of fertile land, rent, instead of scarcely appearing, should, if ever it does so spontaneously, exhibit itself most, at a period when the quantity of produce, compared with the cost of production, is, perhaps, greater than at any other time; and extraordinary high profits, at a time when capital is dear, can only mean high profits relatively even to the price of labour.

Whatever distinction may be attempted, is not, at last, the appropriation of the fertile lands a monopoly? How is it even a partial monopoly? In speaking of the earth, we consider it only as an instrument of production, and

value it only in proportion to its capacity. We might as well reason upon matter without form, and density, or upon mind without its attributes of perception and memory, as upon the earth, in an agricultural point of view, without a reference to its inherent qualities and powers. Even Mr. MALTHUS himself is obliged to have recourse to his third cause for the existence of rent, "It is found to "commence its separation from profits, as soon as profits "and wages fall, owing to the comparative scarcity of "fertile land." Without this condition, the essential and necessary surplus, rent, could never manifest itself. I may have occasion to enquire, whether, independently of their continued application to the land, the profits of stock might not exhibit themselves as usefully, and take a direction as important to the progress of national prosperity, as when under the denomination of rent; and whether, in this manner, the landholder might not preserve his character of importance undiminished and entire. It is less necessary to enquire what actual circumstances give occasion to the separation of rents, though they will, probably, be found in conditions more favourable to the immediate cultivator, than the foregoing theory supposes.

With regard to high price, it may be observed, that the adoption of this relative term is rather fallacious, in an enquiry why there is ever, in natural circumstances, an excess above the cost of production. In this part of the subject we must still have recourse to the scarcity of fertile land for that very part of the produce which constitutes excess. It seems, indeed, a truism, that if the earth, at any given period, produced only just enough to support

its population, there would be no excess. But, as population, when increasing, generally precedes a permanent increase of subsistence, there will be some proprietors, who, under the acknowledged powers of the earth, in their relative excess, will have the power and practice of monopolists. A material distinction seems, indeed, to have been neglected in this discussion as to the early occupancy of new land, whether by an original and rising society, or by the colony of an old society; which latter case seems to have supplied many of the modern arguments, though these are strictly inapplicable to the positions which they are intended to support. It is highly probable, that there has not been, in either case, such a knowledge and selection of lands, as would allow the supposed natural progress of cultivation to take place; and, therefore, that the whole assumption is imaginary and unavailable.

That the general positions of Mr. MALTHUS are incorrect, seems proved by a variety of circumstances; and chiefly by the fact, that the price of corn has not risen with the progress of cultivation and improvement. We learn, from historical documents, that instead of rising, it has, on the long run, fallen in proportion to this progress; even if we admit into the account the reduced value of silver on the discovery of the American mines. The average of the Thirteeth Century, appears to have been nearly 60s. per quarter; and up to the year 1560, there was a most regular and gradual fall down to 10s. during the progress of improvement and increasing population. The rise, on the discovery of America, was to 47s. 5d.

The first sixty-six years of last century give an average of 40s.; and the ten years, ending 1750, only 38s. 9d.

Let us, however, admit that the natural origin of rents and prices has been accurately stated. In omitting the temporary and accidental circumstances, which may give occasion to high prices, we seem to be studiously overlooking the actual case before us, to which if the argument is not applicable, it might have been safely spared. The prices of a remote age and society may have no points of similarity with those of Great-Britain and 1815. To separate the accidents of excess of currency, and other occasional causes, from such as may strictly be considered as permanent, is, perhaps, to refuse the very exception which constitutes our actual situation.

Among the direct or indirect causes of high price, which have been too slightly noticed, are (1.) the general state of the mines, and the relative value of money. (2.) The particular state of the currency. (3.) An increase of demand, relative or positive. (4.) Unusual demand for land itself, in consequence of accumulation of capital and increasing population. (5.) A positive scarcity, from unfavourable seasons. (6.) A comparative scarcity, from insufficient cultivation; whether arising from the errors of the landlord, the tenant, or the legislature. (7.) Direct and indirect taxation. The influence of these and various other causes in producing high prices may be very active, though very unnatural. Has it, however, been shewn, with a reference to the corn question, that the relation of high prices and high rents, as cause and effect, is not always so natural, necessary, or beneficial, as the gross argument

would insinuate? It should, indeed, be our object in the present discussion to shew, not so much that, under natural circumstances, high rents may be advantageous, as that, under particular exceptions, they are injurious; and that the actual situation is that in which the *more or less* is of very great importance.

Omitting, for the sake of brevity, some strong arguments, which seem to shew that the natural progress of rent has not been accurately traced, it may be asked of those who maintain that rents do *not* increase in proportion to the advance of prices, from improvements in cultivation, though they are *higher* than the proportion in a declining country, whether this is the natural order of events, or an accidental occurrence? If the former, it is a singular modification of the essential nature of rent, which is *all* the excess, above the cost of production, including the profits of stock; which profits, it will be remembered, are lower, as capital accumulates. If the occurrence is accidental, it is evident that there is nothing definite in the nature of rent.

The most important corollary from this part of the theory is, that if the price of produce fall, rents should fall likewise, in order that the fair and reasonable balance may be preserved.

If we admit, however, that, under natural circumstances, high prices benefit the cultivator without injury to the community; the advance of rents, under particular and unnatural causes of high price, may be prejudicial, either because the farmer is not benefited by the price, or because the community is made to pay a price, which is not relative to the actual state of wealth and population. If the price

of produce, under taxation, is only advanced in proportion to the amount of the tax, it is clear that the tenant will be injured by any rise of rent. If the advance is greater, the consumer is unfairly taxed. A relative abundance of money, though it must produce a higher rent, will abridge the power of the farmer, unless the relation between the consumer and himself be again disturbed. Under an excess of currency, a positive scarcity of the necessaries of life, and all the other instances of usual, though unnatural, increase of price, a rise of rents seems to invert the equitable order of things. As the cultivation of the ground, and the production of an excess of subsistence, by means of cultivation, are the first object of a society, there seems no reason why rent should not decrease in proportion as this is less perfectly accomplished. Under any other view, we consult the benefit of the landholder alone, at the expense of all the other classes. The natural order seems first to respect the large mass of consumers, then the cultivator, and last of all the landlord. And this is true, even if we admit the force of the qualified argument as to the importance of this last class.

In an enquiry, then, as to the fairness of existing rents, it is necessary to ascertain, whether the causes of high price really authorize an advance, and whether other causes may not be removed, not only without ill effect, but with manifest benefit, to the wealth and population of the country, so as to render any advance of rent decidedly injurious.

It is evident, that there are many specific cases, in which high rents must always be injurious to the cultivator and

to the community. Besides those instances, which occur from unnatural prices, (1.) rent must always impede cultivation in those cases of poor land, which the farmer would nevertheless cultivate, if he has merely the prospect of a return of the cost of production, including the ordinary profits of stock. (2.) In all cases in which the farmer is not provided with all the capital which could be employed on the land at the actual rate of agricultural profits. (3.) In all cases in which rents have not been lowered, though the lands have been let during the greatest difference between notes and bullion. It is evident, that this rule must apply in all gradations to the lowest difference; otherwise, an undue pressure will take place, and the natural progress of price and profits be impeded. (4.) In all cases where rent is not sufficiently behind the prices, or where the interval of advancing prices is immediately accompanied by a proportional rise of rents. (5.) In all cases where the farmers neat profit has not been fairly allowed. As when the landlord cultivates his own soil, he must calculate, amongst his necessary profits, an insurance against occasional losses, uncertainty of crops, and the prices of anxiety and superintendance, these prices must not be included in his share, when he ceases to be the cultivator. The rent must be injuriously high, when they are not allowed to the farmer. (6.) In all cases in which rents are high, although the usual and sufficient exportation of commodities be checked, and the indirect good effect upon raw produce (the consequence of the increased demand for manufactures) be altogether impeded. (7.) If the essential nature of rent be such as is

above-described, and it is to be sought in the excess of price alone, above the cost of production, at which raw produce sells in the market; it follows, that, at periods, when so far from any excess appearing, even the common profits of capital are not replaced, the landlord has no claim to any rent. With the consequences of this necessary inference I have nothing to do. If, however, rent is a certain excess, where that excess *is not*, rent ceases of itself. The most important error in all the reasonings upon this subject seems indeed to be, that, in endeavouring to establish a particular theory, and a necessary connection between cultivation and national prosperity, the decrease of rents is not tolerated, even under circumstances which imperatively demand such a measure, —those which involve a diminished cultivation. If rents remain the same, under circumstances which naturally determine their fall, those evil consequences to the land and the country at large, which are now ascribed to low prices and other causes, must inevitably follow.

I have thus endeavoured cursorily to shew, that high prices may arise from circumstances, which are not infallible signs of prosperity; that high rents may, on various occasions, be injurious; and that, therefore, neither of them can, in a general and unqualified view, be considered as desirable. Whether a natural and beneficial cheapness may not be produced, which shall be advantageous to every class of society, I shall consider hereafter. As a general conclusion, applicable to the state of the times, I should say, that less neat surplus in the shape of rent would be productive of benefit to the community. The influence

of the class of landholders, important as they are in a general view, is not so much required now, as in the early periods of improvement; and the indirect benefit to agriculture from this excess of rent is less influential, than the direct advantage which would arise, if the farmer had an additional interest in his land, the means of greater accumulation of capital, and security in its continued application to the best purposes. That a large share of indirect agency might be safely permitted to the effects of advancing trade and manufactures, is very evident, when we consider the immense proportion which our annual new creation of manufacturing and commercial produce is admitted to bear to that of agriculture.

It may, certainly, be generally objected to the landholder, that he neither sufficiently considers his own situation, nor the relative situation of the other classes of society. He is apt to overlook the moral and physical obstacles which stand in the farmer's way. He is apt to forget, that the superior and permanent advantages, which property in land enjoys, in point of security, certainty of return, and other peculiarities, above every other, connect with it certain extended duties towards the society in which he lives, and which cannot exist without an attention to them. It is in vain to say, Do me this service, and I will do you another. Whatever may have been the errors of governments, or the bad habits of the people, the exclusive power of the landholder is virtually admitted, for the benefit of the community of which he is a member. In proportion as proprietors should refuse to cultivate at all, the interference of the legislature would become just and necessary, for the very safety and existence of

the people. The lesser case involves the same principle, and the virtual obligation on the proprietor is the same.

As, in the early periods of a society, high profits of stock, by admitting accumulation, allow the extension of cultivation, some advantage of the same kind should be allowed at that stage of society, when the necessity for taking fresh land into cultivation, places us, in some respect, in the situation of new colonists. The profits of the capital employed should, on an average of the whole land, be rated high in favour of the cultivator; or else, in countries in which there is much capacity of improvement, and in which the population is increasing, the landholder, who, in the ordinary case, is supposed to derive no rent from the new land, should take from his tenant the risk and expense of cultivation, leaving him to expend his capital on the old and fertile soils. The country should not be deprived of its natural advantages, because one class of people, the proprietors of land, are not satisfied with an extraordinary surplus profit, without any personal risk, or any other contribution to the general stock, than an indirect and selfish expenditure.

If the natural and excellent rule of keeping rent behind the prices were, under every situation, observed; if leases were granted upon the principle of adaptation, or the landlord had the wisdom and policy, during the currency of a lease, to regulate it in this manner; many of the evils complained of would cease to have existence; the bankruptcy of the farmer would be comparatively rare; the rent of the landlord would be secure, and there would be a progressive improvement in the old, and application of capital to the cultivation of new, lands.

CHAP. II.

ON REAL PRICE.

THOUGH, notwithstanding the singular contradiction which the admission involves, the author of the Observations on the Corn Trade has been obliged to admit, as a matter conformable to experience, and in direct opposition to his theory, that the wages of labour do rise, where they have not been obviously and purposely kept down, about in the same proportion as the price of corn, it may be well to consider the merits of the case which he has laid before the public. Mr. MALTHUS has stated the argument, which has been supported on this subject by ADAM SMITH, to be as follows: "Corn is of so peculiar "a nature, that its real price *cannot* be raised by an in- "crease of its money price: and as it is clearly an increase "of real price alone, which can encourage its produc- "tion, the rise of money price occasioned by a bounty "can have *no* such effect." In answer to this argument, Mr. MALTHUS endeavours to shew, that the money price of labour does *never* rise in proportion to the money price

of corn, (1.) because corn constitutes only a certain part of the labourer's expenditure; (2.) because, under all circumstances, the same supply of labour, and the same demand for it, would, from its very nature, remain in the market; and he concludes, that, therefore, "a rise in the money "price of corn occasioned by a bounty, or by restrictions "upon the importation of corn, cannot be less real (cannot less command a greater quantity of labour) "than a rise "of money price to the same amount, occasioned by a "course of bad seasons, an increase of population, the "rapid progress of commercial wealth, or any other na- "tural cause, is real," or can command a greater quantity of labour. That the object of this ingenious author is chiefly the general question of real price appears evident from the injurious consequences, which he has drawn from the supposed principles of the author of the "Wealth of "Nations." It is, however, scarcely necessary to remark, that this mode of attack is rather unfair, and not quite conclusive. It is unfair, because ADAM SMITH never denies that there are fluctuations in the real price of corn. It is not conclusive, because it overlooks the exceptions made under his peculiar argument, and the precise nature of this argument itself. I may add, that it excludes the level of prices to a much more distant period than necessary, and perhaps does not quite apply to the circumstances under which bounties are granted.

It is extraordinary that the general question should admit of any doubt. Not to remark, that his whole peculiar argument is one of exceptions, it may, from numberless passages, be proved, that the disproportion between

the price of corn and the wages of labour is asserted by ADAM SMITH to exist upon most occasions. This fact should have been enforced by Mr. MALTHUS, not only from a general necessity, but because the consequences, which he has drawn, have no reference to the peculiar case of a bounty. They constantly involve and assert the belief, that the cultivation of corn can, under no circumstances, be encouraged by such a measure. "The "money price of labour," says ADAM SMITH, "does not "fluctuate from year to year with the money price of corn, "but seems to be every where accommodated, not to the "temporary or occasional, but to the average or ordinary "price of that necessary of life." (I. 53.) Again, "the "temporary and occasional price of corn may frequently "be double one year of what it had been the year before. "In this latter case, not only the nominal but the real value "of a corn rent will be double of what it was, or will com-"mand double the quantity of labour, or of the greater part "of other commodities; the money price of labour, and "along with it that of most other things, continuing "the same during all these fluctuations." (I. 54.) "The "wages of labour do not in Great-Britain fluctuate with "the price of provisions." (I. 112; also I. 54 and I. 132.) Surely then Mr. MALTHUS's apprehensions could never be realized; and it was unnecessary to prove that the history of our own country shews corn to be a very inaccurate measure of labour.

The peculiar argument, however, supposes (1.) that, in years of plenty, the bounty on export, or restrictions on importation, have necessarily the effect of advancing the

price of corn beyond its natural standard; (2) that there is a progressive state of wealth and population, which is, in fact, the remote object of the bounty, and, therefore, that the farmer maintains his labourers in the same manner, whether liberal, moderate, or scanty, as before, and as other labourers are commonly maintained; and (3dly) decides, by way of conclusion, that the real effect is not *so much* to raise the real value of corn to the farmer, as to degrade the real value of silver.

If the bounty does not affect the real price of corn in *any considerable degree*, this expression implies a partial influence. The *very little advantage* which the farmer derives, is probably proportionate to the quantity of corn consumed by the labourer. A partial influence is also supposed by the variations in the quantity of labour, which a certain quantity of corn will purchase, according to the circumstances of the society (I. 52.) It bears, too, a certain, though varying, proportion, to the money price of all the other parts of the rude produce of the land.

The same observations will apply to the effect of the money price of corn on that of other commodities. It does not appear to be nearly so great or so immediate as we might be led to expect from Mr. MALTHUS's mode of exhibiting the argument. "Though," says ADAM SMITH, "with regard to home-made goods, the farmer "will not be able to cultivate *much* better, or the land-"lord to live *much* better;" they will nevertheless have some superiority to their former state. In the purchase of foreign commodities it is positively allowed, that this

enhancement of the price of corn may give them some little advantage.

There is, then, a real price of corn; and, in the case of a bounty, the supposed effect of a proportionate rise is not *entire*. But let us examine what was the scope of this illustrious author in his peculiar argument. It is clear, that, however correct Mr. MALTHUS may be as to the movement of capital to and from the land in any one particular year, it is not to this limited period that ADAM SMITH confined his views. He adverts, in the first place, to the *production* of corn by the encouragement given to tillage; and, secondly, to the effect *in the long run*. That high prices have been produced by the bounty, nay, that high prices may, under circumstances, encourage tillage, he never denies. It follows also, under his view, that as wages never entirely and immediately follow the price of corn, some encouragement is given for the time being to at least the same amount of cultivation of corn by a bounty.

What are the circumstances under which bounties take place, or restrictions are placed on importation? They both occur in a year of cheapness and low prices, which prevent the farmer from selling his produce at a price, which, with the ordinary profits of stock, replaces to him the capital employed in preparing and sending it to market. This act of indulgence is adopted to make up his supposed losses, and principally to encourage him to continue under cultivation at least as much land as before. In years of scarcity both these conditions are altered; the bounty on exportation is suspended, and the restrictions on importation are removed. But it may, perhaps, be

denied, that in this year of abundance, and at its first establishment, the money price of corn is so immediately and certainly affected, as is necessary for the opposite argument. It is, however, at all events clear, that the high price occasioned by the effect of the bounty on tillage has not yet been produced. That the price of corn is not rapidly affected in an abundant year, or when there are abundant supplies in the market, either by the tax which is added to its price, or by the enlarged demand in consequence of the opened market, or else, as in restricted importation, by the diminished supply, needs, perhaps, no illustration. We have had sufficient proof of the latter during the present year. In the first case, the whole surplus produce of the year may not be exported at all, or not immediately. To raise the price, however, not only the $\frac{1}{4}$ excess, but a still larger proportion, so as to reduce the relative quantity below the last year's supply, must be exported. To raise the price of labour, the export, also, must be sudden, and the diminution of power perceptible. If these conditions are absent, there is not, in the very circumstances of the season itself, in which the legislative interference takes place, so much power as is imagined, to occasion a rise of wages. The encouragement may be said to exist, without any reference to the price occasioned by a bounty, whether nominal or real. The first good effect, or stationary price of wages, seems to be natural to the circumstances of the year itself, and to be independent of the bounty. The scarcity of corn is only relative; and there being abundance of other produce, the prices after harvest will remain pretty

nearly the same, till the farmer has got his crop into the ground for the following harvest, the period at which the full effect of the bounty is to become manifest. The positive diminution of supply, occasioned by the exportation of the first year, and consequent want of stock on hand, together with the continued exportation of the second year, now occasion that rise of prices, which ought theoretically to affect the wages of labour.

The question now occurs, whether prices will equalize themselves. The principal strength of Mr. MALTHUS consists in his supposition, that, at this moment, the same demand and supply remaining under all circumstances, in the market; and the farmer refusing to keep his labourers in the same manner as before, a starving and diminished population is the consequence; and higher wages will not occur, till the increased demand occurs also, as an effect of this diminished population; a process requiring a period "of a considerable number of years."

But, allowing this extraordinary process to be correct, as, during a great many years, labour is relatively cheaper, does the farmer, under all his advantages, cultivate only the same quantity of land, and in the same manner as before, so that the demand for labour shall be the same, and there shall be no room for the effects of supply and demand in raising wages? The supposed effect on the encouragement of tillage and production is, in this case, not attained, as these are not increased by the bounty.

Let us, however, suppose that the advance in the price of corn has taken place; that the labourer cannot allow his family as much bread as usual, without an increase of

wages, and that the purchaser refuses to pay any increase. One of three consequences follows. The labourer must either find a substitute for bread; diminish his usual allowance of subsistence; or find some other employment. (1.) If a substitute is adopted, so as to equal the difference of price; if he consume more potatoes, for instance, and less bread; the lessened demand for corn will reduce its price to the level of the labourer's wages. (2.) If he lessen his consumption of corn, without a substitute, the same event will take place; but a relaxation will take place also in the rate of increase of population, which must inevitably have the effect of raising his wages to the price of corn. In this instance, two concurrent circumstances will equalize the prices of corn and labour. Or, again, if he consume the same quantity of bread, and diminish the other parts of his subsistence, still if corn is so far from being the main support of the labourer, that, according to Mr. MALTHUS, it is only a relatively small part, population will be affected; and in all these cases, in spite of the farmer's refusal to pay an advance, and of the presumed efficacy of high prices, wages will equalize themselves with corn. As also it is, of course, "only to a temporary effect, "to a temporary encouragement or discouragement, that "any commodity, where the competition is free, can be "subjected;" this effect must occur long before a period "of some years" has elapsed. (3.) In what circumstances of peace or war, poverty or wealth, the same number of hands, shall, under disadvantages, continue unemployed in the same market for many years together, it is not easy to conjecture. If, however, other employment is to be found,

and the supply of labour in the agricultural market shall be diminished by this transference, it is very clear that the effect of raising wages must be far more decisive and immediate, than in the progress of decreasing population, or even under those other circumstances, which I have described.

Allowing that labour and other commodities remain at the same price as before, how does the farmer employ his surplus? As there is more silver in the agricultural market, and only the same quantity of labour, he cannot employ it with advantage; as what extended operations can take place without labour? If, in consequence of the refusal to pay an advance proportionate to the increased expense, some labour should (as is highly probable) be withdrawn from the market, he will have even a diminished power of cultivation, and the bounty will be nugatory.

It requires a very slight attention to the reasonings of Adam Smith to discover, that his peculiar argument is not meant to apply to the effects of corn or wages in any particular year, but to an average influence of several years. To this case, therefore, Mr. Malthus's theory does not strictly apply. The author of the Wealth of Nations gives it as his opinion, that, in a long period of years, this measure will not have the effect desired. It will not so encourage tillage, as alone to meet the necessities of a growing population; which must, of course, be supported at least as liberally as in past years. The general conclusion, which is drawn from his reasonings, is, that "its final tendency, on the long run, is rather to diminish "than augment the whole market and consumption of

"corn." (I. 267.) a position which is distinct from the immediate application to the land, and a case which is admitted by Mr. M. himself.

It appears, that, in proportion to the complicated improvements of a society, and the more liberal mode of subsistence which is usual, the demand for corn, like that for all other commodities, will be increased; and consequently that the real price of corn will be diminished, that is, the power which the same quantity of corn shall have in purchasing labour will be less. If, from the habits of the times, more bread shall be required next year than this year, the same labour must be purchased next year by more bread, if this is to be had; and *vice versâ*. If other articles are substituted for bread, the real price of corn diminishes still more; and it will diminish exactly in the proportion, in which other vegetable substances make a part of the labourer's subsistence. These are, however, not the qualities of an accurate and unchangeable measure of value. It is, indeed, clear, from numberless passages, that this character was attached to corn, only as being the commonest vegetable food of the people. "Corn, or "whatever else is the common and favourite vegetable food "of the people, constitutes in every civilized country "the principal part of the subsistence of the labourer. "The money price of labour depends *much more* upon "the average price of corn, the subsistence of the labourer "than upon butcher's meat, or of any other part of the "rude produce of the land." (I. 293. 234. 248.) It is admitted that there is no accurate measure of value, though corn is more so than any other commodity or set

of commodities. Price is adjusted "not by any accurate "measure, but by the higgling and bargaining of the "market, according to that rough sort of equality, which, "though not exact, is sufficient for carrying on the busi-"ness of common life." (I. 46) There was, then, no necessity of insisting upon an error, into which this admirable author has not fallen; and since uniform experience shews that there is, in an advancing society, a connection, and a very early one, between the price of corn, or the commonest vegetable food, and the wages of the labourer, it was unnecessary to introduce a theory so palpably contradicted by daily practice. That other co-operating causes of the rise of wages exist, and that abuses, arising from the misconduct or miscalculation of the employer, have frequently prevented the natural course of advance, will not be denied by any one conversant with rural or political œconomy.

CHAP. III.

THE FARMER'S CASE STATED.

THOUGH the question of the policy of legislative interference on the subject of corn can be argued legitimately upon national grounds alone, and though, as has been justly observed, the interests of the farmer should be wholly excluded from the general argument; yet, as the numerous advocates for a more restricted importation dwell on his case alone, and the public will not easily be persuaded that such an omission would be an act of impartiality or strict justice, I shall briefly consider the subject in its relations to this class of society; a class, from which the principal complaints have proceeded, and for whose protection (nominally at least) the Legislature has adopted its well-known Resolutions.

It has been attempted, by some of the friends to the Act, to set up certain abstract claims in favour of the cultivator of the soil; as if, amongst the industrious classes of society, he were, at all times, and under all circumstances, peculiarly entitled to the consideration and defer-

ence of his countrymen, as well upon his own personal merits, as the relation he holds with regard to the rest of the community. To establish such claims, however, it is evident that certain conclusions must be adopted, which do not seem to flow spontaneously from any premises, which are supplied by history or observation. If we allow the cultivator many excellent qualities arising out of his habits and situation, and grant the necessity of his occupation to the well-being of his country, we cannot concede, that, in his public capacity, his speculations are undertaken with less interested views than those of the merchant, manufacturer, or trader; or that his business is of such intrinsic importance, as to sanctify, we may so say, the errors of all such as may be engaged in it. It may, perhaps, not be unfair to consider him as entering upon his particular occupation with views directed to his own interest, at least as nicely as to the public benefit; and we may, perhaps, shew, that while some nations, under circumstances, which, with every due allowance, are not wholly unlike our own, have existed and flourished without that refinement of agriculture, which is considered as essential to our security; others, which have been wholly agricultural, have suffered all the pains and penalties of relative poverty and insignificance. On the general question, too, it may be urged, that if the profits of the cultivators of the soil be lower, they are more secure than those of other trades; while the pursuit of agriculture is uniformly attended by comforts and enjoyments not possessed by those engaged in the other walks of industry.

The question as to the general profits of the farmer has been so diversely treated, even by authors, who have in view the defence of his present claims, that it is not easy to decide as to the real fact. While one writer founds his arguments as to the comparative national importance of this class on their immense profits, and says it can easily be proved that the profit on the produce of land is four times as great as that on manufactured goods, and that if a large manufacturer gets only 15 per cent. it is considered as a very great profit; others have asserted, that the interest on the capital employed in agriculture has been uniformly less than that of traders and manufacturers, and that, of the population of Great-Britain, employing capital, skill, and labour, no part is half so ill rewarded as the farmer; that "nothing, in short, but "such an enthusiastic attachment to agricultural pursuits, "as the seaman feels for his profession, does or can sup- "port the spirits of those concerned in them." Without adverting to the causes or consequences of this enthusiastic love for agriculture, it may be remarked that the 15 per cent. which some have considered reasonable, or the 10 per cent. which is generally adopted as the expected profit of farming, is no despicable remuneration, and holds out a better chance for accumulation than the moderate 7 per cent. of the speculator in building, the paltry 5 per cent. of the public annuitant, and so many other possessors of capital, and the very far inferior returns, which, in so many instances, have, during these perilous times, rewarded other varieties of productive industry. Can it, however, admit a question, whether, in the estimate of profit as applying

to these times, and, in a national view, the gains of the farmer should be calculated on the circumstances of each individual year of war, or on an average of those fluctuations? If, on such an estimate, the balance is found in the farmer's favour, can he claim assistance, under an inconvenience, the duration of which is, by all parties, proved to be impossible?

What, again, is the value of the general argument so often repeated, that, as all trades and manufactures are protected in a very especial manner, the farmer has, therefore, a right to protection? If this is available with regard to some classes of the society; there are others who will be affected, to whom it cannot apply. But, is he unprotected? Does any one complain, as Mr. NEWNHAM justly observes, "that great cattle, sheep, and swine, beef, mutton, "and pork, except bacon, that hops, malt, and oak-bark, "are placed under restrictions?" Is it not the general wish, that the importation of wool were also totally prohibited; of which 15,700,000lbs. were imported during 1814? But, then, the importation of *corn* has been virtually free. Has not agriculture flourished under this free importation? Have not the corn farmers had the means of accumulation? Can the same be said of the growers of wool under similar circumstances? In a country, of which, under a virtually unrestricted corn trade, and a rapidly advancing agricultural prosperity, the growth has amounted to about 50 weeks consumption, and the whole importation, (including three years of scarcity—1800, 1801, 1810) has not exceeded an average of a single week's consumption during the last fifteen years; can it be admitted, that

the comparative case of the grower of corn is such as to justify interference, or require protection? The competition with the foreign grower has, at the worst period, been too necessary, or too inconsiderable, to make the case of the British farmer very pitiable.

Is the situation of the manufacturer exactly similar to that of the farmer? Is not the bulk of the articles, the importation of which can injure him, a virtual restriction on their admission beyond a certain (I will say) innocent amount, while the small space occupied by most of the commodities of the manufacturer and artisan, their comparatively trifling weight and bulk, with the great disproportion between their value compared with their other properties, and that of the commodities of the farmer, render their transport easy and unexpensive. Would it not be much more practicable to do a serious injury to the manufacturer, than to the common farmer? Is this supposed preference really injurious? Has the freest importation of corn ever done any important injury to the farmer, before this unfortunate year of complaint? Did not the most flourishing period in our agricultural history succeed immediately to the year of the greatest importation ever known? What, in 1802, was the effect of the importation of 1,186,237 qrs. of wheat, and 833,016 cwt. of wheat flour, an excess of 972,261 qrs. above the importation into the port of London in the terrible year 1814? Why, the unexampled increase of our agricultural prosperity. Whether this took place in spite, or in consequence, of the continental system, is of little importance, as it is a

system which can never return; and, under that system, the amount of importation was very considerable.

Has not the protection, originally given to the manufacturing and commercial interests, been highly repaid to the country; and has not the continuance of that protection been warranted by the extraordinary zeal and enterprize which have been manifested for the discovery and application of the numerous means for abridging human labour,—means, by which we have been enabled to undersell the rest of the world, notwithstanding the pressure of the times? Is the numerous class of farmers entitled to protection, from the manifestation of the same spirit? Arguing from their known habits and dispositions, would an exclusive privilege have been so repaid? It may well, indeed, be doubted, whether any one of the implements of husbandry which the farmer employs, or any one of the manufactured articles which he wears, could, under this ill-favoured protection, be purchased elsewhere as cheaply as in this happy country. It cannot, at least, admit of a doubt, that any difference of price will be more than compensated by duration and quality. Is it certain, that, under protection alone, an increased per centage in the price of bread corn will cause that article to be ultimately afforded cheaper? Will this protection, as in manufactures, bring us so much below the level of foreign price, as to cause us to rejoice in restrictions on importation? This benefit may, and, under certain circumstances, ought to arise; but the specific object of the Corn Bill is of a very different nature. It holds out no such consequences. High price is the avowed benefit, and low price is deprecated as a

national disaster. It has, also, been well remarked, that the natural limitation to the production of corn must prevent any permanent reduction of price; but that there are no limits to improvements in machinery, to iron or coal, and, therefore, none to the cheapness to which many of our manufactured articles may fall. Omitting many other arguments, I shall observe only, that the superior security in the farmer's occupation, above that of the tradesman and manufacturer, has been too much overlooked. However small his profits may be, unless the whole constitution of society is altering, unless population is checked, some return *is certain*; and a demand for his principal products cannot ever be doubtful. Bread will be required, even if the little comforts of life, which the manufacturer supplies, cannot be purchased. In the two cases there does not, indeed, appear to exist the same essential necessity for protection.

With regard to the numerical importance of the class of farmers, (an argument that has been brought forward with great apparent weight, even by the best authors,) though we have no exact means of forming an estimate, we have sufficient evidence that there is no tenable ground of claim from any supposed superiority in this class of the community. Mr. COLQUHOUN, who proceeds upon the best data that can be obtained, shews that the whole class of agriculturists, including labourers of every description, amounts to 995,998 families: while the families chiefly employed in trades, manufactures, and handicrafts, amount to 1,129,049; and those not included in either of these classes amount to 519,168, being a total of

1,648,217 families unconnected with agriculture. The same fact is again evident from the circumstance, that while in 1183 towns in England, Wales, and Scotland, are contained 5,272,712 inhabitants; in 18,928 villages, the whole population, including traders, manufacturers, and artizans of every description, together with all unproductive consumers, amounts only to 6,683,591, or in England an excess of $\frac{1}{3}$ alone.

That the capital annually created by agriculture falls short of that generated by the other kinds of industry, is evident from the following statement. While the whole annual produce of agricultural labour, (including the products of all the mines) is estimated at £216,817,624; the other classes produce £213,703,748. But if the value of the mines and minerals is £9,000,000, the real produce of agriculture is reduced to £207,817,624; or a difference of £5,886,124 in favour of the remaining classes.

These various statements have been brought forward with an intention very different from that of exciting an injurious comparison between the agricultural and other classes of society. The welfare of each is evidently essential to the prosperity of the whole. The inaccurate and exaggerated representations of many enlightened friends to the Corn Bill require an answer, though they must prove a greater detriment than service to the cause they mean to assist.

Whatever may be thought of the weight of these arguments in a general view, they will be allowed to have little bearing on the question of a free importation of corn, if it can be shewn, that the sufferings of the farmer are not

wholly owing to the causes assigned, and are removable by other more direct and natural means than those which he wishes to introduce. At all events, they who are disposed to think that there is no evident necessity for the interference of Government, urge, without injustice, that, in petitioning for a relief, which is to affect with some apparent injury other classes of society, the claimant must prove that he really requires and deserves it. He is expected to shew, that, in proceeding upon just and equitable claims, he has, consistently with his own security and protection, already employed all other accessible means of avoiding an end, which, though necessary to himself, is supposed to be a national and particular evil.

Let us consider more nicely what has been, and is, the situation of the British farmer. That for the space of 20 years past, under an importation large in amount and virtually free, and under all the increasing burthens of which he now complains, he has been very prosperous, and has made unusual profits, is admitted by the testimony of the witnesses examined before the Houses of Parliament, as well as proved by a fact, from which there can be no appeal. While the average from 1804 to 1812 was 88s. 11d. per qr. and for the last four years, ending May 1813, 100s. 5d. it is now allowed, that, under at least the same disadvantages, corn can be raised at the reduced price of 80s. with a sufficient profit to the grower. And though, as I shall endeavour to shew, the evidence of the sworn witnesses, as well as of a host of writers upon the same subject, is so insufficient and contradictory as to warrant no practical inference; yet the general fact is conclusive,

that no one person has ventured to place protection at the highest average price, and the Legislature itself, the staunchest and most interested friend to the Bill, has not ventured to exceed 80s. Under every supposed disadvantage of unrestricted importation at 63s., with high rents, property-tax, poor's-rates, tithes, &c. there is ample evidence that the farmer has been prosperous; while most other classes, from the lowest trader up to the greatest capitalist, in manufactures and commerce, have been victims to bankruptcy, or, at the best, have been obliged greatly to abridge their comforts, and contract their expenditure. Without, however, meaning to ascribe it as a reproach to the farmer, that his general habits of living have, in the mean time, materially improved; that his sons and daughters (to the injury, it is true, of the public, who have lost an honest and able class of servants) have advanced their pretensions, and frequently mistaken their real situation; it cannot be admitted, that, at a period when the rest of the community is flattering itself with the hope of regaining, in some respect, its relative station, those who have been so long benefited can have any claim to protection in a measure, which, according to Mr. Malthus, "will ine-"vitably occasion a waste of the national resources, and "will *certainly* injure other branches of national industry "more than it will benefit agriculture."

That the farmer has not become as affluent as he ought to have done, cannot, perhaps, be disputed. Under the admitted increase of profits, and the "indiscreet extra-"vagance," of which his friends accuse him, if we are not warranted in expressing censure, we may, at least, with-

hold some of our pity for his present sufferings. If 80s. has been adopted as a sufficient premium for cultivation, (though the sufficiency of a lower price has been proved by subsequent experience,) how great must have been the power of accumulation at 100s. and upwards! If this power has been misemployed, can he decently call upon the nation to indemnify him, by a misapplication of the national resources?

But it is urged, that he would be content to submit to ordinary and natural fluctuations of profit, but cannot bear this unequal competition with the foreign grower. Is not this distinction, in sincerity, more plausible and fanciful than real? And would not the cheapness arising from a very abundant harvest, in reality, affect the grower as heavily as, or more heavily, than the present competition? If so, should a probable or possible, national benefit be lost, upon a ground purely nominal? Not to remark, that it is doubted whether the supposed cause has been productive of the known effect, nay, that the effect of importation has been altogether denied, by one of the best friends to the Bill; to pass over the opinion, that such as are not possessed of sufficient capital to wait till the trifling and temporary influence on the corn market is past, are insufficient and unfit cultivators of the soil: are these little and needy cultivators themselves to derive no benefit from the peace, which has occasioned the injurious importation? Are all *their* calculations alone to be founded solely on war prices? Or will the Legislature, when dispensing the blessings of peace, by design exclude them from any such benefit? If it be urged against some late speculations of

the manufacturer and merchant, who, in their eagerness, perhaps, over-stepped the bounds of prudence, and suffered much detriment in consequence, that such is the natural effect of war, and that a sudden rupture with America should have been previously calculated; the same calculation, I answer, should have been made by the farmer also with respect to peace, on the confirmation of which the jealousies of nations are for a time (alas! too short a time) naturally and beneficially set aside, and a reciprocal interchange of their respective superabundance should, upon all occasions, succeed, unclouded by distrust, unimpeded by narrow views of policy.

It is generally admitted, by the evidence of witnesses, both by friends and opposers of the bill, that a large part, by far the most numerous class, of British cultivators, has been subjected to considerable losses during the last year (1814). Of the actual extent of those losses, and of the prices at which the farmer can afford to grow corn, no certain information can be obtained from a comparison of the numberless discordant assertions, in and out of the Houses, which have been made, in reference to both these subjects. The statements of many very candid and intelligent advocates for either side of the question, it would be easy to oppose by as respectable authorities on the same side: And if one of the most violent advocates could say, that, "with no other evidence than the Reports, "he would not have supported the Bill;" it may be easily believed that those, who are against it, would not find many arguments in favour of the adopted measures. It would be difficult for them, in fact, to find any argument,

upon, which to ground practical consequences of much less importance than regulations, which respect the supply of subsistence for a whole people.

I shall endeavour to ascertain, from every source which is open, what may be considered a fair and sufficient remunerating price; premising generally, that, as the evidence is, for the most part, equivocal and contradictory, and has already been proved inaccurate; while, as Mr. A. YOUNG asserts from experience, the same breadth of land "in "soils which are particularly adapted to wheat, would "always be cultivated, let the price of corn be what "it would;" so have also the various formidable predictions, within and without doors, been falsified as to the effects of low price on the general agriculture of the country. As the protecting price, whatever it may be, is supposed to include all the expenses of cultivation, direct and indirect, it is not necessary here to enter into a detail of those expenses.

Of the sixty-four sworn witnesses, who were examined before the two Houses of Parliament in 1813 and 1814, thirteen are "some of the most eminent land-surveyors "and land-agents from different parts of Great-Britain;" and fifteen are occupiers of land, distinguished for their practical knowledge, and the accurate manner in which they have kept their farming accounts. These twenty-eight witnesses are examined, as to the price at which British corn can be afforded under the present rent and expense. The remainder are persons who have been long and extensively engaged in the corn trade. Of the twenty-eight, twelve adopt the price of 80s. as that which will remu-

nerate the cultivator. Of this number, however, three admit the possibility of cultivating at a lower price. Mr. CRABTREE thinks, that if the farmer could be protected as far as 70s. or 75s. there would be no difficulty in getting farmers to take leases. Of the remaining fifteen, there is a variation in the price supposed to afford the grower an adequate remuneration, from Mr. CLARIDGE at 64s. to Mr. DRIVER, who is of opinion, that, at the rents settled four or five years ago, 100s. is not too much. From these extremes we have all the intermediate steps of 66s. 8d. 70s. 72s. 75s. 87s. 88s. 90s. 96s. Mr. A. YOUNG decides that 87s. is the lowest price at which the British farmer can cultivate, without absolute ruin, even at a supposition of 3 qrs. per acre, turnips at £5, and clover at £7.

It may be asked, what was there in this evidence, upon which the legislature could establish a practical and universal standard of remuneration? If the last estimate, from a man of such minuteness in detail, and such experience, as the Secretary to the Board, be entitled to any respect or consideration, with what propriety could it be resolved that 80s. is a sufficient price? Why, again, should other authorities be despised, which give a much lower rate of expense, and were equally bound to assert, and equally capable of investigating, the truth. Supposing 80s. to be an exact average point between the two extremes, how is the end of legislative interference attained, which was so to raise the price as to give an encouragement to the growth of corn? If 80s. be the average for England, it is clear, that the supposed encouragement rests only in the warm imaginations of those concerned, as the protection

can have but a very partial operative influence. In highly-favoured soils and situations, it will act as a stimulus; but in those lands, which, in order even to return the expenses of the farmer, cannot be cultivated under a higher price, cultivation must altogether cease. In many places the price will be too high, in many others too low; and the real interests of individuals will be as unequally guarded, as under the circumstances of unrestricted importation. If it has been admitted by the Committee, that a very considerable proportion of wheat is now raised in districts consisting chiefly of cold clay, or waste and inferior lands, on which wheat cannot be grown, but at an expense exceeding the average charge of its cultivation on better soils, why does Parliament at once determine that 84s. and 96s. are too high prices? There is nothing, at least, in the Report, which should authorise them to throw out of cultivation these sources of such extensive supply. On the contrary, it is represented as appearing from the evidence, that, if such lands were withdrawn from tillage, they would for many years be of very little use as pasture; and that the loss from such a change, as well to the occupiers, as to the general stock of national subsistence, would be very great. It is true, that the opinions of Members as to a fair protecting price, a price which would afford the farmer a fair living profit, varied as much as the evidence itself. The subject was, unfortunately, far beyond the reach and jurisdiction of any Legislature. The benefit, which they could confer, must be partial, but the injury extensive. Mr. Rose considered that 72s. to 74s. was a fair price; Messrs. Calcraft, Vyse, Stew-

ART WORTLEY, 72s. to 76s.; Gen. GASCOIGNE, 74s.; Sir JAMES GRAHAM, 72s; Sir M. W. RIDLEY, under 80s.; and Messrs. COURTENAY and WYNNE doubted.

We shall not be more satisfied by what has been said in the numerous periodical works, and a formidable list of pamphlets, on this particular subject, from Lord SHEFFIELD, who declares, that, at a rent of 15s. per acre, 100s. will not protect the farmer, to Mr. BROUGHTON, who could produce one hundred tenants, who, with corn at 64s. per qr., would not hesitate to pay a rent of 35s. Of more than fifty sufficient authorities which I have before me, it is really a waste of time to record the extraordinary varieties in opinion. They only confirm, what is already evident, either that strange miscalculations have been made, or that an average standard of remuneration can never be adopted, so as to produce the boasted effect of keeping up, by the stimulus of high price, the usual and necessary growth of corn throughout Great-Britain. It will, I am afraid, unfortunately appear, that, in this solitary instance, that happy mean which is so desirable in the ordinary concerns of life, cannot be adopted without much prejudice to those whom it is meant to serve. It has, indeed, been pretended, with how much honesty and attention to the evidence, I need not say, that the Bill has not for its object to raise the price of corn to that of protection. What, when it has been sworn, and as solemnly asserted, that this is the lowest price at which the farmer can raise corn, without absolute ruin? I shall neither dwell upon so palpable a misapprehension, nor stop to enquire with what consistency, or by what rule of arith-

metic, one decided friend to the Bill has declared, that did he believe the object to be to raise the price of bread, it should never have his support.

But whatever may be the real price of protection, it cannot be doubted, that the British farmer has suffered severely during the last year. By a comparison of the actual prices, at which wheat has sold, with the opinions already adduced, we may form a rough estimate of his losses under every combination of circumstances. It may be remarked, indeed, that the mode of taking the averages almost precludes the possibility of approaching the simple fact of actual prices. It has been clearly proved, not only that the principle by which they are calculated is erroneous, but that the averages have not been correctly determined, even under this imperfect principle. By the present system, England is divided into twenty-two inland, and thirty maritime, counties. These last are arranged into twelve districts, the average prices of which govern importation. Sir JOSEPH BANKS has pointed out the injustice, and absolute impropriety, of this arrangement. In the twelve districts are included at least six, which are not wheat growing counties; the consequent high prices in which are most unfairly set against those of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Lincoln, and Northumberland, whence the greatest supply is drawn: Mr. SPENCE has also some important remarks on this subject. All parties, indeed, agree, that, in most instances, the prices of the very best samples, or of the middling ones, form the basis of the calculation, without including the worst samples, which are, perhaps, in the proportion of five to one. This circumstance keeps

the average of the markets far above the real and equitable price. It is to be hoped, that this subject will occupy a much larger portion of the attention of our legislators than they have hitherto bestowed upon it. According to the present mode of calculating, it is evident that all the fancied benefits of the bill must be nugatory; and, as Mr. A. YOUNG observes, 63s. will, even in the view of its best advocates, be just as good a price as 80s.

We are obliged, however, to take the averages, as we find them; and as, however unfair in their detail, the general relation of prices through the year may be presumed to be accurate, we must be satisfied with the instruction we can obtain in this manner. In Table No. I., I have arranged, from the Gazette, the average prices for England and Wales for 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815; and it will be at once seen, that, since the 4th of December 1813, the farmer has in only one instance obtained the price supposed to be necessary for the cultivation of wheat, and therefore his loss must have been in the exact ratio of the difference. The highest price of 1814 was 80s. 5d. (September 3,) the lowest 67s. 4d. (July 9;) the former being a gain of 5d. per quarter; the latter a loss of 12s. 8d. per quarter. But the average of the whole year was 73s. 10¼d. being a loss of 6s. 1¾d. per quarter. In 1815, again, the average of the first thirty-eight weeks, to September 23, was 67s. being a difference of 13s. per quarter. Now, if 80s. is the lowest price under which wheat can be grown, the farmer has evidently been a considerable loser. But he has not lost as much as many of his friends assert, even under the worst supposition; and if we calculate the very great excesses of

his receipts of former years, above his admitted outgoings, the spirit of this calculating nation must be materially altered, in order to see, in the situation of the farmer, any thing very deplorable. Let us examine the average prices for one year only, previously to his existing circumstances of distress. According to the Gazette, the highest price of 1813 was 122s. 11d. (March 27,) the lowest 72s. 7d. (Dec. 11,) and the average of twelve months 108s. 1d.; the gain per quarter on the highest sum being 42s. 11d., and on the average 28s. 1d.; and the loss on the lowest being 7s. 5d. Without any formal calculation, then, as to the exact gain or loss, it may suffice to say, that according to the *only* authentic documents we possess, the average price of 1812, 1813, 1814, and 1815, was 93s. 8d.; being a gain of 13s. 8d. on every quarter of wheat sold.

It is clearly, however, admitted, that the farmer has suffered; whether, with one author, we adopt the loss of 20 per cent. on all the land he cultivates, or, with Mr. JACOB, prefer 25 per cent. or, with Mr. SIMPSON, 31½ per cent. or the still higher sums of anonymous authors, who with equal zeal in the cause, have less claim to our attention. We cannot, however, omit the observation, that, in most instances, these losses have rather been darkly and mysteriously predicted, than unequivocally and circumstantially narrated from the experience of any one author, who has written on the subject. Total ruin awaits every farmer! The corn farmer will be ruined! No prospect but a certain loss of from 10s. to 80s. per acre!! Tenants will necessarily give up their farms! Others have, indeed, more decidedly, but not less vaguely and unsatisfactorily, stated

their belief that "thousands and tens of thousands of "tenants are already ruined in every county of the king-"dom. Thousands and tens of thousands of farmers are "completely broken up. Many thousands of acres of old "lands have been left uncropped with wheat, and more thou-"sands of new consigned to a state of nature;" and all this mischief had occurred, according to Mr. SPENCE, (this man of many thousands,) so early as November 1814. Without drawing any other conclusion from these exaggerated statements, (contradicted by wide experience,) except that unquestionably much evil has been endured, let us, on the authority of more dispassionate writers, examine who, in the large and important class of cultivators, have been the real sufferers. Fortunately, upon this point, there is great uniformity of sentiment. They are universally said to be either the small farmer, of no capital, or the farmer, who, as is detailed in the evidence, calculating on 99s. and increasing prices, has taken his farm, generally by tender, at excessive rents; while, in the mean time, the real and substantial farmer remains secure and uninjured under the temporary depreciation of his commodities. Many confirmations of this statement might be cited from the publications of the most distinguished and sensible friends to the Corn Bill. Brevity demands a very slight notice of their opinions.

Mr. A. YOUNG, in his Enquiry, observes, "the greater "part of the kingdom is in the hands of small, weak, and "poor farmers, who are really unable to stand the loss of "one such year as the present. The whole race of these "men must either give up their employments, or struggle

"through their difficulties by saving every shilling that "is possible, and consequently deteriorating their insuf- "ficient cultivation by carrying such savings to a ruinous "extreme. Whenever a great number of our farmers "shall be found in a distressed situation, it must greatly "lessen their competition in the markets with their capital "brethren; who must infallibly, in such a state of things, "be most amply repaid for all their preceding losses by "the enormous prices to which corn would be sure to "rise."—"Much the greater portion of the cultivators of "the soil," says Mr. JACOB, "is of that class who are "very deficient in capital; the number of large farmers "is less than of the smaller class; and of those who occupy "large farms, many are very far removed from abundance "of capital." "Some considerable districts of this "kingdom contain very few large farmers, or clean "and correct cultivators. Four-fifths of the corn of "England, excepting in Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and "Northumberland, is raised by a class of men too poor "to cultivate well." "The number of bad and poor "farmers far exceeds the good ones." "If the im- "porting price be fixed too low, the *smaller* number "will even, at first, be enabled to subsist and cultivate "as they have hitherto done, but the greater number "will be driven from the fields; they will soon cease "to cultivate, and thus a deficiency will arise, that, in "a few years, must increase the price to an enormous "height, and most amply remunerate those who stand "least in need of remuneration. Whatever economy is "used, the most numerous class of farmers, those with

"small capitals must be exhausted in *five or six years*." These passages seem to establish the fact upon the best authority. They shew what are considered the consequences of the past situation of the agriculture of the country, and also the important national inferences which arise from these admitted premises. These inferences ought, perhaps, to weaken the faith of the supporters of the Corn Bill, as to its really beneficial tendency, in the only view which seems of great or universal concern. The last observation of Mr. JACOB involves, indeed, some difficulties, which he alone can solve. In five or six years these small farmers must be exhausted. But under what supposition? Why, of circumstances, which are absolutely impossible,—the want of the natural reaction of scarcity and abundance on one another, and of these on prices. If, from the scarcity of next year, arising out of the low prices of the present year, prices rise, as they must do, then is the great stimulus acquired, and cultivation will proceed. If the farmer can wait five or six years without being exhausted, he either cannot be a small farmer, or, can have no right to complain. What poor tradesman, without any returns, could do the same?

The poor farmer, however, without capital, is suffering, and must cease to cultivate. If, as individuals, we feel pity for our neighbours' sufferings, as citizens of this great empire, could we help rejoicing, if this change, so much dreaded, could really take place? Will it be asserted to be an evil, by the most strenuous advocate for the Corn Bill, and for an independent supply, (the novel, but perhaps necessary, policy of this great and extraordinary

people,) if the miserable and insufficient cultivator were to reassume his proper station in this rapidly advancing society? Will it be maintained by any one, that a machine of such productive power, in the hands of an able and full-grown man, should, at such a period, be left to the management of a weakly, and therefore querulous, infant? Such an argument can only be held by those, who have not enquired into the necessities of the country. Experienced and candid observers have already determined on the other side of the question. They have admitted that capital, capital is the great desideratum towards agricultural improvement. They have proved that the want of capital is the great drawback on national independence. Can it be for a moment supposed, that, whatever private charities they may entertain, these authors, whose patriotism is unquestionable, could experience any movements of regret, if it were possible that the greater number of the present inefficient cultivators could be replaced by more efficient occupants? They have themselves, with a mixture of truth and error, shewn, that it is not a deficiency of knowledge, or an obstinate adherence to ancient practices, that has kept agriculture from progressive improvements, but a want of that capital, which is the moving principle in every concern. "In the "eastern parts of England, especially in the county of "Norfolk, it has, perhaps, been owing to the wise policy "of the great landholders in preferring tenants with abund-"ant capital, that they have been enabled to increase the "revenue derived from their estates. If the tenantry "had been deficient in capital, though the rents had re-

" mained as they were thirty years ago, the example even of " Mr. COKE would have been insufficient to create those " abundant supplies of corn, which have contributed to " feed less improved districts." " Owing to the liberal " application of capital, which creates a most abundant " produce, and to the conviction that a smaller portion of " land highly cultivated is more profitable than a larger " one negligently managed, the agriculture of Scotland " has advanced towards perfection with unexampled rapi- " dity, in spite of an inclement climate, and a soil not " naturally fertile." With regard to large farms, Mr. A. YOUNG, in his Inquiry, says, " there is no investment of " agricultural capital proportionally so beneficial, in direct " production, as the transfer of several small ill-cultivated " farms into the occupation of a man whose capital en- " ables him to introduce improvements." With these authorities, and the use of our own reason, shall we any longer deem it a *national* misfortune, that the occupier of small farms, and the insufficient cultivator of large ones, may possibly be removed? Shall we not deprecate the notion, that these men, whom, according to Mr. A. YOUNG, Lord ORFORD termed " barbarians, producing not a third " of the corn they ought to do," should be suffered to continue, as public injuries, " to keep up the price of corn only " for the benefit of the greater capitalists, their rivals." Would it not be more reasonable to fear that there is more fancy than truth in the representation; and that the circumstances have not been such as to induce these " tens of thousands" of unfortunate men to resign their situations, and thus make way for the application of the

large capitals, which, as Mr. JACOB has shewn, can never more be turned into foreign markets of competition? Shall we, in short, procure what is felt by a large part of the community as an immediate evil, by a measure, of which the ultimate effect is highly mischievous?

There is another class of farmers, who are among the sufferers, to whom still less is due than to the last unhappy set. "All those," says Mr. SPENCE, "who have "taken leases within these five or six years, some of the "most intelligent and spirited of their class, must, except "when released from their engagements, by the generosity "of their landlords, be utterly and irretrievably ruined." To say nothing of the natural remedy which is here proposed, can it be fairly maintained, that, under such circumstances, the farmer has any right to complain, when it has been declared by Mr. DRIVER in evidence, that, in valuing land four or five years ago, upon the supposition of wheat being at £5 per quarter, farmers have "in many "instances bid above such valuation?" Why should the farmer not be subject to failure, as well as any other trader, who has made a false speculation? If he has made his estimate upon the expected continuance of war prices, why should he not be liable to the consequences of such a mistake?

There seems to be another deduction from the farmer's claims in the probability that he has been himself, to some extent at least, the manufacturer of his own evil case. Has importation been really the cause of the low prices, which, (if we are to consider 77s. 9d. a low price) commenced, by the Gazette, on the 4th Dec. 1813? By the

Table No. I. (column 2,) containing an account of the quantities of foreign wheat imported into London for three years (1813, 1814, 1815,) it will be seen with how much accuracy the early complaints were made of the effects of importation on prices. From March 29 to June 26 inclusive, (1813,) were imported 96,746 quarters; during which it appears that prices were at the highest, and varied from 122s. 11d. to 117s. 1d. During the considerable importation, which succeeded, down to Nov. 27, prices continued, indeed, to fall as far as 82s. 4d. which they were on that day. During the three first months of 1814, (Jan. 10 to April 23,) the whole amount of importation was 1683 quarters; notwithstanding which, prices fluctuated from 79s. 9d. to 73s. 5d. which they were on that day. In May, June, and beginning of July, prices were at the lowest for that year, varying from 71s. to 67s. 4d. though the importations, particularly in the latter months, were very inconsiderable. The total of the two months importation, (May 1, July 2,) being 19,860 quarters. Again, at a later period of the year, when the importations of four or five days frequently exceeded that amount, and, on one occasion, October 8, reached as high as 45,420 qrs., prices were within 8d. per quarter as high (74s. 2d.) as they had been in February of the same year, when no importation at all had taken place, (74s. 10d.) But to omit minutiæ, which may be inaccurate, though they are founded on the only evidence which exists, and the only one upon which any contrary argument can be maintained, what was the whole amount of foreign importation into the port of London in 1813? It will appear to have

been 245,603 qrs.; during which prices were at the highest, or averaged 108s. 1d. In 1814, the amount was 437,737 quarters, 19,941 sacks of flour; and prices averaged 78s. 10¼d. In 1815, 85,456 quarters, and 9,485 sacks; while prices averaged 67s. Does this statement shew any exact relation of cause and effect between importation alone, and the prices of wheat? What, again, was the total net importation into Great-Britain from December 4, 1813, on which prices first fell below 80s. the price necessary to cultivation, to the 5th day of October 1815? 609,144 quarters. What proportion does this whole amount bear to the consumption? Taking our population on a rough estimate at twelve millions, and allowing the consumption of about a quarter of wheat per person, we may pretty nearly calculate that a fortnight's consumption amounts to 500,000 qrs. The annual amount of imported corn during the two last years has then equalled about nine days consumption; and, in that terrible year 1814, did not exceed a fortnight's consumption by more than 25,632 quarters. But, according to Mr. JACOB and others, our own growth at 10s. is equal to fifty weeks consumption. The whole surplus of 1814 was, therefore, only equal to our demand. Our own growth has, indeed, by some writers, been said to be excessive; and, therefore, to be a cause of low price, independently of importation and previous abundance. This we cannot prove. Of the amount of importation there is no doubt.

What relation does this proportion of imported corn bear to the difference of price in the three years? To have produced the whole effect which is ascribed to it,

the quantity of imported corn must have been more than double that raised at home, as the price has diminished more than in that ratio, from 122s. to 58s. If this is not the case, other causes besides this word of terror, Importation, must have had an essential operation in the production of the mischievous effect. Can we, however, believe, that when, under the whole quantity imported in 1813, (270,520 qrs.) prices were extravagantly high, an excess of 255,112 qrs., about a week's consumption, should have sunk them, in 1814, to less than one-half their price of the former year? Can this have been really productive of the mischief, against which the two Houses of Parliament were called to legislate? Was it *dignus vindice nodus?* But if other causes have co-operated, they must be either essential or accidental. If the first, there was no occasion for the Corn Bill; if the latter, there was nothing to justify its adoption. How inconsiderable, indeed, has been the whole amount of importation! It is impossible, however, not to remark, as a curious instance of perversity, that this argument of the danger of free importation has been applied by the advocates for restrictions in two directly opposite views. First, it is necessary to limit the importation of corn, because, without such a measure, an independent supply cannot be procured. Other countries will pour in such a quantity of their cheaper commodity, as to undersell our market, and prevent, by low price, the home cultivation of corn. But, in the second place, an independent supply, under restriction, is necessary; because all the nations in the world together, and all the ships of every nation,

cannot, in any one year, supply us from their excess with a sufficiency for our consumption during the paltry period of a few weeks. An independent supply is necessary, because other nations cannot furnish us. A foreign supply is dangerous, because it can be furnished by other countries.

Inconsiderable, however, as has been, and may be, the utmost extent of the evil—a point which the best advocates for the bill endeavour to establish with their best arguments,—three reasons are assigned, why this trifling amount is a serious injury to the British grower. First, that a small excess necessarily affects the price greatly; secondly, that the importation is wholly into the port of London, which unfairly regulates all the country markets; thirdly, that this importation is just at the time when it is likely to be most mischievous to the British farmer. Now only observing of the first reason, that, whatever may be the fact, there can be no necessity for such an effect, and of the second, that even if it were true, which we know it not to be, it is equally an abuse, unconnected with the general question of policy; I shall remark on the third, that, with our present experience, we cannot admit it to have any practical accuracy or weight. In the year 1813, the heavy importations were before the harvest, and in the months of May and June; whereas, in 1814, they were subsequent to the harvest, and continued, with more uniformity than will admit the effectual application of this argument, down to April 1815; since which period, though there have been no importations, prices have diminished, not increased, having been, April 15, 71s. 9d. and July

22, 67s. 8d. The exact *moment* of importation then seems to have been a range of eleven out of the twelve months. But I am disposed to believe that importation was not the sole cause, and, perhaps, not a considerable cause, of the comparatively low prices, which began December 4, 1813. If this be so, the farmer's claim, on the ground of unequal competition with the foreigner, is annulled; and the measure very far from being justified, which, whether eventually prejudicial or otherwise, for the moment tended to excite discontent, and keep up the evils arising from alarm and apprehension.

It does, indeed, from the only evidence which we possess, appear, that the apprehension of evil produced the evil itself, and that a very frivolous cause, "operating on the fears of "the most cautious and timid of all the classes that com- "pose our national population," produced the unfortunate effects which we have seen described. It has been already shewn, that the lowest prices were not, as has been pretended, at the precise moment of the greatest importation, nay, that they have occurred when no importation has taken place. In March 1814, when the markets were said to be depressed below prime cost, no importation had taken place for some months. As early, however, as November 27, 1813, when wheat was at 82s. 4d., and, in the following January, it was reported in the public journals, and was known to many unprejudiced enquirers, that great alarm had been created from the apprehension of very low prices, and that large and unusual quantities of British corn were forced into the markets by this terror alone. Even as late as May 14 of this year, (1814,) the

price was depressed to 68s. 10d. before importation had taken place. Need we the express and multifarious evidence, to this point, from the avowed friends to the Bill? Shall we again ask Mr. DRIVER the questions proposed in June 1814? "Do you not conceive that the "present low price of grain is wholly occasioned by the "abundant crop of last harvest, and not in consequence "of any expectation of foreign import?" 'Certainly not. 'It is the alarm of the importation from abroad.' "Are "you aware of any large importation of foreign corn?" 'There is an expectation of it.' "Are you aware that "any foreign corn has been imported?" 'No. I do not 'allude to any particular quantity lately imported; but the 'farmers are very much alarmed, and, of course, bring 'every bushel to market.' Shall we add the testimony of Mr. WEBB, Mr. MAXWELL, Mr. CLUTTON, and above twenty other experienced men, to prove that the importation itself produced no evil, and that these timid men "ran into the danger to avoid the apprehension?" Shall we ask Mr. BANKES, or Mr. C. LONG, whether the sole and real object of the Bill, was not rather "to give con-"fidence to the farmer," than to avert any determinate injury known to have resulted from free trade? If, however, the Bill was only nugatory to this end, did not the discussion, to which it gave rise, occasion a positive evil, by increasing and extending the alarm?

But may an abundant harvest itself have no effect in producing low price, without any reference to alarm or importation? Mr. WESTERN's opinion on the general question deserves to be brought forward. He contends (and

is he not a staunch friend to the farmer, and a gentleman, upon whose cool and manly deliberation much reliance should be placed?) that "it was not the importation of "corn which reduced the price; a small excess in supply, "or a deficit, would operate either way to depress or "raise the price." He maintains, "that the abundance "of the home supply will govern the price of the market, "and that, if agriculture were properly encouraged, corn "would be grown as cheap here as in other countries." These are important admissions from one of the most decided friends to the Bill; and conceding, as I readily do, the full extent of his premises, I am disposed to differ only in the trifling circumstance of the best remedy for the existing evils. Importation has not produced them; why, then, restrict importation? A variety of home supply has existed; why, then, exclude the usual effect upon prices? Low price has, in itself, no preventive influence upon the agriculture of the country; why, then, establish an artificial high price, in order to remedy an evil not occasioned by the presumed cause, and which, in itself, may be injurious? Are there, again, any circumstances, which, in the opinion of the advocates for restrictions, justify a free importation? Mr. Jacob (one of the most extensive and intelligent enquirers on this subject) decides, that, in deficient years, the growth of foreign markets should be admitted; which, "though an evil to the British "grower ought to be submitted to, because it is of more "importance that the public should be fed, than that he "should be indemnified for any loss sustained by an un-"propitious season." But have we not, in the acknow-

ledged crops of 1813 and 1814, the conditions required for all the above consequences? Can the farmer wonder, if the abundance of 1813 should have lowered his prices, or complain, that, in a crop below the average, as in 1814, a free ingress of foreign corn should be permitted? We have every proof that can be required, that the abundant harvest of 1813, the most abundant, according to the evidence, for ten years past, did actually lower the price. This effect, too, was produced not only in the natural way, but by the avarice of the farmers, who, tempted by the existing price, and dreading a natural depreciation from quantity, and an artificial one from importation, "set their threshing machines to work, and "brought such quantities into the market as lowered the "price from upwards of £30 to £14 per load." That since this period the most numerous class of farmers have, by their alarm, and partly by the real distress arising from this alarm, overstocked the market, and been obliged to sell "at the times price," is not doubted. The evidence of Mr. CLARIDGE, Mr. WM. HENNING, Mr. BUXTON, Mr. CARR, prove the abundance of the harvest of 1813, and the excessive quantity on hand in 1814. It proves the existence of a cause adequate to the production of the effect of lowered price; and it is satisfactory, that not a single witness attributes the fall to actual importation.

The amount of money loss to the farmer can, as I have already shewn, scarcely have been as great as some writers maintain. If the crop was, on an average, one third above that of former years, and the difference of price was only $\frac{1}{3}$, his loss would be $\frac{1}{9}$. If, while the crop exceeded by

$\frac{1}{3}$, his price was reduced $\frac{1}{2}$, his gain was $\frac{1}{3}$ less than in former years. But the average of 1813 was 108s. 1d., of 1814, 73s. $10\frac{1}{4}$d.; being in the two years an average of 90s. $11\frac{1}{2}$d. Is he warranted in his timid complaints, by this view of his condition? Or, shall we refer to his past gains, in order to shew that the public have nothing to do with his unmanly apprehensions, and the legislature no necessity for interference, under prospects, at least equivocal, of conferring a real benefit on the nation?

Before the claim to relief of the farmer, even under distress, can be admitted, in a case involving the interests of the rest of the community, it is necessary to enquire whether these small and poor farmers have really made an accurate estimate of their expenses, and have done all in their power to diminish them, consistently with the same extent of cultivation as in former years. How great are the difficulties of keeping accurate farming accounts, has been feelingly described by some of our most enlightened agriculturists. Every one will allow the fact; and if the small farmer of little property, the only real sufferer, is a very bad calculator, and has a very imperfect idea of his expenses and receipts, (as is unfortunately admitted by all parties,) he will be less reproached than for his usual entire neglect of such concerns. If, as is generally the case, "memory alone is the depositary of "the secrets of his trade," shall we trust his own account of his losses? and *necessarily* believe, that if he has lost considerably by one of his crops in an abundant year, or under common circumstances, he may not have more than balanced his accounts by his remaining produce? If, too,

accuracy of calculation be the great secret of profitable farming, can we, at once, believe that he has turned his little capital to the most advantageous account, or derived all the fair and reasonable profit to which he may have been entitled without this precipitated measure?

In all charity and deliberate inquiry, but with a high sense of the importance of the question in a national view, an assurance of the powers of improvement which this country possesses, and of the necessity for such improvement, let us farther consider the general spirit and temper of this unfortunate class of cultivators, whose distresses have been made the ground of legislative enactments. Can any individual, who has personal acquaintance with them, believe, that, allowing their calculations to be accurate, they have in general knowledge enough, or enough of candour and liberality, to adopt the means, which are in their power, of abridging the cost of the various instruments of production? At a period, when by the application of that same calm and philosophic spirit of experiment and enquiry, which has given us the pre-eminence in our political and other institutions, in arts, manufactures, and commerce; when numberless valuable additions have been made to the stock of agricultural facts; when, by the zeal and ingenuity of individuals and societies, improvements have been made, and recommended with all the force of persuasion, and the evidence of necessary conviction; will it be maintained, that they have been willingly and gratefully adopted? Ask the gentleman farmer through the *greatest* part of England and Wales (Scotland is too far above this reproach, not to

deserve a separate commendation) whether, on the introduction of the best implements and the best systems, and the permission of their gratuitous use and application in his neighbourhood, resistance or ridicule has not been his usual reward; and whether, in nine cases out of ten, prejudice has not prevented their adoption, though conviction as to their superior advantage could not be refused. However unwilling we may be to make a comparison between two important classes, by which the character of one must suffer, we cannot, in this place, help defending the mechanic and manufacturer against the insinuations of their superior advantages above those of the farming classes. It has been said, that if any tradesman or mechanic discover an invention, whereby he can better his condition, a patent is obtained, and the inventor, for a time, has the sole advantage arising from the sale of his articles; whereas the farmer has no such monopoly, no such legal security, by which his improvements can be confined to his own farm. Now, although it is certain that a patent will be just as readily granted to a farmer as to any other man, unfortunately there is no need of such security. In this line of industry the monopoly is already too complete to require additional protection. Why does the manufacturer seek a patent? Because he well knows that the prying and curious foreman of his neighbour on each side would otherwise adopt the improvement in twenty-four hours. From the manufacturer's rival you cannot keep his invention. The farmer, alas! has in general no rival.

It has, indeed, been brought forward in the farmer's favour, that he is "of a fixed character," and unwilling to change. He is described by Mr. JACOB as "the most "timid and cautious of mankind, and as naturally slow "in improvements;" and by Lord SHEFFIELD, as "devoid "of the enterprising spirit of the mercantile classes." But is consistency, however beautiful she may sometimes appear, always a virtue, and always worthy of admiration? If she be ever deformed and injurious, can her possession be admitted as a claim to protection under circumstances like the present? Among numberless instances of the injurious effects of this principle, ask the patriotic and enterprising Lord SOMERVILLE, whether he has ever found this spirit mischievously active in regard to oxen; or Mr. BENETT, of Pyt-house, whether any strong prejudice prevails against a reduction in the number of horses. Ask the acute Mr. TUGWELL, whether the demonstrable superiority of certain ploughs has had its proper effect. Ask Sir J. SINCLAIR and Mr. A. YOUNG, whose practical and enlightened exertions are so widely known and felt, as to fallows, and the far-famed four-course system. Ask the farmer's true friend, Mr. CURWEN, as to the beneficial effects of soiling, and the average produce per acre. Ask (though as Government, with a singular inconsistency, has hitherto persisted in refusing protection to the growers of wool, it will be in vain to ask) the zealous Lord SHEFFIELD, and the clear-sighted and indefatigable Dr. PARRY, as to the importance and possible introduction of fine-woolled sheep. Ask a very long list of excellent and experienced men, as to the neglect of numberless acknowledged ad-

vantages; a neglect which may, indeed, be a national disgrace, as it is a national misfortune. If the cause of this perverseness lies, as there may be little doubt, in the early habits of the farmer, and his comparative want of education, it will be considered as a national disgrace by those, who view with pride and delight the great efforts which are making for the other classes of society, and who are aware of the excessive, and therefore impolitic, concern, which the British Government, in particular, has at all times taken as to the qualifications of those who are to be supported by other trades and occupations.

I have thus endeavoured to shew, that, exclusively of those insufficient cultivators, whose loss, from their poverty, we cannot easily deplore as a national evil; of those farming speculators, whom we cannot, in justice, protect; there is another class, which, in fact, from their perverse adherence to what ought to be obsolete practices, and their want of disposition to adopt approved means of increasing the amount of produce, or of abridging the expenses of cultivation, is little entitled to protection. I shall hereafter consider the subject rather more at large, and shall hope to shew, that, independently of any connection with free importation, and the natural causes of high price, a salutary cheapness may be attained, in conjunction with that grand popular object,—an independent supply.

CHAP. IV.

THE CASE OF THE LABOURER.

THE question of the necessity of an increased rate of restriction in the importation of bread corn, as far as concerns the agricultural labourer, has been argued upon very different, and some of them, at first sight, extraordinary grounds. It is said, that if corn be suffered to remain at its present low prices, he must be distressed, from three causes. First, he will not be able to procure employment upon any terms; secondly, his wages must be reduced; and thirdly, as scarcity and high price are decidedly beneficial to him, so is abundance and cheapness of corn, under any circumstances, injurious.

The first of these anticipations proceeds upon the supposition, that the low price of corn, by diminishing the capital of the farmer, will oblige him to employ fewer hands; and that the want of employment by those, who can turn their labour to no other occupation, will be felt in the increase of pauperism and its consequences. These conditions are independent of the labourer. Nothing, however, can be

more certain than that, if by the indirect influence of the lowness of corn, the farmer is unable to give his servants employment, they make a very insufficient exchange in the direct benefits of cheapness, and we cannot too much pity the unmerited sufferings of this numerous and innocent class. That the same panic, which has produced the ruin of so many poor farmers, has extended its mischiefs to some of the working poor, cannot be doubted. We have the evidence of Lord SHEFFIELD, Mr. A. YOUNG, Mr. JACOB, Messrs. HARVEY, BUXTON, BENETT, &c. that the demand for labour is diminished, and that the diminution will become general. In order, however, to prove the necessary and inseparable connection of such a want of employment with the corn question, it must first be established, that the farmer has dismissed his servants upon sufficient grounds; that cultivation could not proceed, under a diminished expenditure, without new restrictions; and that wages could not be diminished, without immediate injury to the labouring classes. As some of these points have never been proved, and others may, perhaps, be positively denied, I shall dismiss them as not belonging to the immediate subject, and consider the actual situation of the labourer, and the benefits of high prices.

The question as to the rise and fall of wages has been discussed, first on the grounds of the general connection between corn and labour; and, secondly, from actual experience. Mr. MALTHUS attempts to prove, that the whole of the wages of labour can never rise or fall in proportion to the variations in the price of grain, the

effect of which, whatever it may be, must be very slow in its operation. I have already endeavoured to shew that ADAM SMITH was nearly of the same opinion, so that there was, at least, nothing new in Mr. MALTHUS's view; and I can best answer both authors, by a sentence already quoted from the latter author himself. "It appears, from "the evidence before Parliament, that wages, when they "have not been obviously and purposely kept down by "parish allowances, have risen about in the same pro- "portion as the price of corn." It cannot, however, be doubted, that the rate of labour, like that of all other commodities, will also be, in a great measure, influenced by supply and demand. It has, indeed, been proposed by the author of a valuable article in the Edinburgh Review, (Feb. 1815,) that "as corn rises because it is "scarce, for what purpose should wages rise in proportion; "as it is impossible that any rise of wages can enable "the labourer to consume the same quantity of a scarce "article as before; and when the supply is diminished, a "smaller quantity must be consumed." This is generally true, but not true in detail. The object is to give the labourer proportional power over the same quantity of wholesome food, though, perhaps, not of the finest wheaten bread. Experience, however, shews, that the labourer will consume the same quantity of the finest wheaten bread, when he can do so by a rise of wages. In England we must look to every class of the community but this, for economy, and the use of substitutes. Various instances will offer themselves to the recollection of every person connected with the labouring classes, of the most whole-

some mixtures of flour having been, during scarcity, refused, and the usual allowance purchased at an injurious expense. In Scotland, where education is better, this prejudice is, probably, unknown.

That the wages of labour would, under the present circumstance of reduced price, *naturally* fall, and under the forced and artificial distress *necessarily* fall, seems to require no farther proof.

But it is asserted, that a reduction of wages will be highly injurious to the labouring classes, even under continued employment; and that, in cases in which this reduction has been attempted, "misery, and not prosperity, "has been the consequence." Lessening the price of of agricultural labour is said "to be taking from the "poorest a portion of their small pittance, and reducing "them to the condition of the slaves of that cheap "country, Poland." With all due consideration for the respectable author who thus expresses himself, and with every feeling of humanity for the poor, I would ask, Is it possible, that, under the presumed continuance of occupation, and a reduction of wages proportionate only to the reduction in the price of bread corn, (and we are considering this part of the subject alone,) any injury can result to the labouring poor? If, as has happened in some instances, the farmer endeavours to obtain all his relief at the expense of his agricultural servants; if, for some years he has not given them as high wages as were their due, and thus, while increasing his own gains, has prevented any accumulation on the part of his labouring dependants; if, from his own improper modes of paying

wages, and the habit of throwing his servants on the parish, he prevents the usual connection between wages and provisions, and cannot therefore ascertain a fair rate, these are abuses with which the general question has nothing to do. "If, again, an unnecessary reduction of wages has, in many instances, been occasioned by that panic, which has thrown so many of the labouring poor out of employ, still the main question is not affected. The proof is yet wanting, that, consistently with all attention to the labourer's comforts, some reduction may not take place in the cost of one of the instruments of production; and that this measure, in combination with certain other means, may not favour the continuance of a cheapness of provisions, salutary to the country, and unconnected with the mischiefs of legislative interference.

"Ask the ploughman," says Mr. SPENCE, "who can "now but obtain 16l. per annum, where he formerly "obtained 20l. whether the reduction in the price of bread "has compensated him for the reduction of wages." Let us examine these conditions. At the period when his wages were highest, the quartern loaf was, at the least, 18d. or 20d. Let us say 18d., and that it has fallen only to 1s.; wages have fallen $\frac{1}{5}$, other commodities remaining the same. But if, of his wages (20l.) $\frac{2}{5}$ consist of bread, his power of purchasing other commodities equals 12l. His wages are reduced $\frac{1}{5}$ or to 16l. If bread is reduced $\frac{1}{3}$, this expense is only 5l. 6s. 8d. His command of other commodities is then equal to 10l. 13s. 4d.; or he is, under the worst supposition, poorer by 1l. 6s. 8d. a year, or about sixpence per week. Can this diminution of

power, under an extreme case, render his situation so desperate or pitiable? Will any one, too, maintain that none of the other articles of his consumption, as beer, cheese, &c. will not be reduced, in consequence of this reduction of corn and labour? It is, indeed, probable, that many other of his expenses will be diminished, if Mr. SPENCE's affecting description of the losses of the inland trader and manufacturer has any prospect of being realised. If these articles fall in any proportion, the situation of the agricultural labourer will be so far from being deteriorated, that it will be much superior to his former state. It must not be overlooked, that the author, whom I have quoted, himself allows, "that all other articles *must* "follow the lowness of grain;" and Mr. A. YOUNG considers it as one of the greatest evils of free importation, that "it brings a low price of corn, engendering, as it is sure "to do, a fall in many other commodities."

If, however, it can be proved, that the reduction of wages has, in many instances, been injurious to the labouring classes, is it unfair to infer, that the proportion of fall has not been accurately calculated, and that it has been more directed by the caprice and fears of the employer, than the strict necessity of the case? By the Leeds Paper of December 1814, we learn that this was the fact, and that an excessive reduction of one-third had taken place. This fall may be ascribed partly to a season of the year, when labour is less in demand, and partly to an unjust estimate. If the reduction in the price of bread is $\frac{1}{4}$, then, to observe the strict proportional rule, and to bring his circumstances exactly to the same point, the rate of fall

might be $\frac{1}{4}$ of $\frac{2}{12}$ or $\frac{1}{10}$; if $\frac{1}{3}$, as $\frac{1}{3}$ of $\frac{2}{3}$, or $\frac{2}{15}$; if $\frac{1}{2}$, as $\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{2}{3}$, or $\frac{1}{3}$.

But is this part of the labourer's expenditure accurately estimated? or is it not, sometimes, of much greater consequence that bread should be cheap, than is generally supposed? Mr. MALTHUS has founded his rate upon the data in that invaluable History of the Poor, by Sir F. EDEN. The Table No. III. in this work, has been constructed from his authorities, and will enable us to see at once, and more clearly, than we have yet been enabled to do, the proportion which bread bore, even 20 years ago, to other expenses. It is to be regretted, that no continuation of this excellent book of reference has been made for the present times. The difficulties are great, and, for many obvious reasons, increased since Sir F. EDEN's time. The suspicions, which, in these days, impede the progress of enquiry, will, it is to be hoped, wear away with the growth of a new generation, unused to the circumstances of a continued warfare. The lapse of time which has expired since Sir F. EDEN's publication is, however, in this respect, less to be regretted, as the prices of the scarce years, which he records, approach tolerably near the dearness of those which are just passed. The estimate is, therefore, on the whole, fair, as relating to these days. The tables comprise particulars of twelve counties. At the top is the number of which each family consists; the second line is the year, in which the calculation was made; the third, the weekly expense of the whole family in bread or flour; and the fourth, the total weekly expense, including every charge that can be made, as births, burials, sickness,

schoolings. I have added a column, with the average weekly consumption of each individual, and the weekly expense; from which it is deduced, that, in the twelve counties named, the weekly average consumption of each person is 13½d. and the total expense 2s. 6¼d. being as 54 to 121, or more than ⅔. It is evident that these calculations must be only an approximation to the truth. They are, however, the only data that we possess, and those upon which many important reasonings have been founded. The great variety in the consumption of bread evidently puts it out of our power to form any universal conclusion as to the influence of the price of wheat on expenditure. We may, however, observe, that, in five counties, the proportion of bread exceeds one-half, in one it agrees with the general average amount, and is in one exactly ⅔; while, in five others, the variation is from somewhat above ½ to nearly ⅔. We must further remark, that, in some of the counties, as Hertfordshire, many families were reported to live, when wheat was at a moderate price, entirely on bread and tea; and, in Somersetshire, to consume a much larger quantity than is here stated. We may bring various instances from the same authority to prove, that the consumption of wheaten bread, even in those days, was a much more considerable article of expenditure, than is generally believed. Sir F. Eden himself observes, that "the best wheaten bread is so essential a "part of the diet of a labourer in the southern parts of "England, that he is convinced, any farmer, who attempted to vary the diet of his men, by the introduction "of various palatable and nutritious soups and puddings,

"would be considered as a very hard-hearted fellow,
"whose only view in so doing was the promotion of his
"own interest." In mentioning a particular family, he says, "if the wife were as economical in the kitchen, as
"her husband is industrious in the field, I have no doubt
"that half their income might be laid by, and their family
"as well fed, as it is at present, upon a diet not less
"wholesome, and what, I think, from the variety of
"dishes that might be prepared, would soon prove more
"palatable, than bread for dinner six days in the week,
"and a small piece of plain roast beef on Sundays."
Various other instances of great consumption of bread may be adduced. In Monmouthshire, the total annual expense of a man, his wife, and nine children is 30l. 14s. of which 23l. 8s. are for bread alone. In Northamptonshire, a man, his wife, and five children, spend 13l. in bread, out of 27l. 16s. 2d. A family of eight, in Oxfordshire, consume bread to the amount of 27l. 6s. though their whole outgoings are only 35l. 2s. Another family, also in Oxfordshire, of five persons, out of 22l. 15s. spend 16l. 18s. in bread. In Berkshire, nine persons spent annually 63l. 18s. 8d. of which bread cost 36l. 8s. In Wiltshire, 11s. out of 14s. were the weekly expense of bread to one family. In another of eight persons, barley flour amounted to 8s. out of 14s. 4¼d. In North-Wales, a labourer's family, out of a weekly expense of from 10s. to 11s. 4d. spent 7s. in barley. Another, earning from 6s. 4d. to 6s. 8d. spent 3s. 6d. in barley.

In Sussex, Sir F. EDEN remarks, the principal diet of labourers is wheaten bread. Mr. A. YOUNG's Table

for the same county, which I have included as above, does not warrant this inference. We learn, from this and other examples, how difficult it is to legislate for a whole people; and how probable it is, that, in numberless instances, which we cannot estimate, such interference may do more harm than good. We may, however, with tolerable safety conclude, that, under natural circumstances, bread forms a larger portion of the labourer's expense than $\frac{2}{3}$, and that in exact ratio to the largeness of families, the article of bread becomes, according to the present habits of the people, more necessary and indispensable. While the single man spends a comparatively small part of his earnings in this kind of diet, and can at all times shift for himself, with some degree of ease, the married man with a family consumes in a much larger proportion, and is exactly so far interested in the high or low price of bread.

The items, of which the expenses of the agricultural labourer were made up in 1795 and 1796, are bread, flour or oatmeal, yeast and salt, bacon or other meat, tea, sugar and butter, soap, candles, cheese, small beer, milk, potatoes, thread and worsted, rent, fuel, clothes, births, burials, sickness, schooling. Whether, during the late years, the labourer has been enabled to enjoy the same power, is a point which may be doubted, but cannot satisfactorily be ascertained. Of sixty-six families it may be remarked, that, in the years enumerated, forty-three exceeded their earnings in a greater or less degree, twelve had a greater or smaller surplus above their expenses, and eleven made up their deficiencies by a good harvest. Of

this number, thirty-nine allowed themselves a small quantity of beer; fifty-four occasionally fed upon bacon or other meat; sixty-four had tea, sugar, and butter; forty a small allowance of cheese. The article clothing seems to admit the greatest variety; and it is not easy to see, why eight persons in Bedfordshire should be clothed at an annual expense of two guineas, and five persons in Yorkshire should, in the same year, spend 8l. 13s. in this necessary.

In examining the expenses of a family of six persons in Northamptonshire, 1795, we find that the whole expenditure was 36l. 12s. 5d. per annum, and the total earnings 29l. 18s. leaving a deficiency of 6l. 14s. 5d. A sensible "Country Gentleman" has given us the expenditure of a family of five persons in the same county, in November 1814. We find that the total expense was 54l. 18s. 4d. total earnings 36l. 2s., leaving a deficiency of 18l. 16s. 4d. In this case the annual expense of each individual was 11l. 1s. 4d. and the former 6l. 2s. The amount of clothing in the latter instance was 1l. 10s.; in the former 12l. 12s. 2d. The articles of tea, sugar, and butter, to the family, in 1795, were 4l. 2s. 4d.; in 1814, to the labourer's wife, 5l. 12s. 8d.

Upon these and some other calculations, which have been published, I have to remark, that though they may be individually accurate, their general value is very doubtful. In the evidence, we hear no mention of several of the little luxuries, which have been above enumerated. There are, however, some important facts, which would lead us to believe that the hard times and high prices of

twenty years have not contributed much to the comfort of this important class; especially as we must admit the continuance of that natural prejudice which opposes the introduction of an improved and cheaper diet at the cottager's table. The evidence of Mr. BENETT shews, not only the dependence of the price of labour on that of corn, according to the habits of the country, but the influence of the price of corn on the power of the labourer. It does not, indeed, appear, why, according to his representation, the price of corn should not almost wholly regulate the wages of labour, seeing that the surplus is trifling, and the whole diet, bread.

There never, indeed, was a more impolitic system, than that which has been developed in the evidence, whether it be considered in reference to the individual, his employer, his parish, or the country at large. With what feelings can any class of society ask for relief under misfortune, or complain of their own peculiar pressure, when, for years, they have degraded a respectable class of their countrymen, by forcing them to have recourse to the workhouse; and have thrown upon the shoulders of their fellow parishioners a burthen which it was their duty, and in their power, to bear? The arguments in defence are really too trifling to be worthy of notice. It appears, however, that, in the county of Wilts, a bushel of corn will suffice for the weekly maintenance of a man, his wife, and two children, including all his necessary expences. "We calculate," says Mr. BENETT, "that every person in a labourer's family "should have per week the price of a gallon loaf, and "threepence over, for *feeding* and *clothing*, exclusive of

"house-rent, sickness, and casual expenses." No allusion is made to any of the items contained in the above lists. Mr. DRIVER, indeed, an intelligent surveyor, who has been connected with all the home counties, says, that "the "labourer is considerably better off than he was twenty "years ago." But how is this proved? "The principal "subsistence," he continues, "of the poor is on wheaten "bread, except in some northern parts of England "and in Wales, where it is generally of rye, oats, or "barley. In all parts of England they use potatoes to "a very great extent, which they did not twenty years "ago." Sir F. EDEN's Tables will, I fear, shew, that full as much wheaten bread was eaten in his time as at present; and that many other little comforts, which are now uncommon, were in more general usage in 1795. It is to be feared, also, that potatoes, the invaluable substitute for almost every other article of diet, are not universally adopted to the extent which they merit.

A great advance of wages has, however, taken place. The Table No. II. is arranged from Sir F. EDEN's Counties from 1792 to 1796, and comprehends Mr. A. YOUNG's Sussex. It appears, that the agricultural wages of these counties, in the years mentioned, was about 9s. per week. According to the Northamptonshire "Country Gentle- "man," his labourers earned, November 1814, 31l. 12s. per annum, or 12s. 1¼d. per week. Mr. A. YOUNG says, that the price of labour, during twenty years, has risen nearly to a par with provisions. Of the witnesses, Mr. DRIVER says, wages have advanced from 7s. or 9s. to about 15s. per week. Mr. BAILEY, that about 25 years ago they

were, in Northumberland, about 8s. or 9s., and are rather more than doubled. Mr. CLARIDGE; that the rise began with the scarcity in 1799; and that, in the northern district, the average price of labour rose from about 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per day. In Staffordshire, according to Mr. HARVEY, wages are in winter 2s. 6d. and a gallon of beer. Twenty years ago, they were not quite half: and, including the difference of price of beer, there is a still greater difference. In Somersetshire, according to Mr. HENNING, wages were, twenty-five years ago, 6s., now are 9s., besides three pints or more of cider. Another witness says, the rise has been from 1s. 3d. to 2s. or 2s. 4d. Mr. WAKEFIELD says, that, in Suffolk, wages have doubled in twenty years. The same has taken place in Huntingdonshire, according to Mr. MAXWELL. In Surry and Lincolnshire, the common labourer has 2s. 6d. per day. In Essex, by Mr. BUXTON's account, labour is at 18s. or 21s. In Wilts it is doubled; from 6s. to 12s. In Berks, an increase of ⅓ has taken place in twenty years; the average price being about 12s. with some advantages. In Kent, 14s. or 15s. In Essex, ⅓ increase in twenty years. Mr. A. YOUNG says, "In all the particular instances with "which I am personally acquainted, combining rates and "labour, there can be no question of their being doubled "in the last twenty-five years." Mr. BIRKBECK says that, in Surry, wages have risen from 7s. to 14s. The anonymous author of some excellent Letters in the Farmers' Journal, says, the average wages were 14s. 7½d. per week for seven years ending 1814.

It is, indeed, incontrovertibly true, that wages, when they have not been purposely kept down, have risen about in the same proportion as the price of corn. But does it appear, that, according to the favourite theory of Mr. MALTHUS, the power of the labourer, generally speaking, has been very much increased by high prices during these late years of war? I think not, if we deduct the accidental increase of power acquired by the distresses of tradesmen and manufacturers, who, as we well know, have sent to every market immense stocks of their various commodities at very reduced prices. In order to prove whether the situation of the poor has, or has not, been bettered by high prices, we must not, however, enquire whether their expenditure has increased, but whether the relation between their power and their expenditure has been so much greater, as to make them comparatively less dependent on parochial or other assistance, than they formerly were. Under this view it will appear, that the agricultural labourer is very far from improved in his condition, even with the advantage of continued dearness. In 1795, the average wages of Northamptonshire (neighbourhood of Northampton) were 7s. 6d. per week; the total expense of a family of six persons was 36l. 12s. 5d. and their whole gains 29l. 18s., leaving a deficit of 6l. 14s. 5d. to be paid by the parish. In 1814, in the same county, wages were 12s. 2d. per week, and the total expense of a family of five persons was 54l. 18s. 4d., from which their earnings, 36l. 2s., being deducted, leave 18l. 6s. 4d. to be supplied by poor-rates. If the wages, in this latter instance, are, as they may be considered, below par

it is an additional disgrace to the farmer; but the case exemplifies, what may be seen in numberless other instances, that the poor are improved only by having become poorer. The various exaggerated statements, both in and out of the Houses, on the ameliorated condition of the labourer, might be exposed, with great effect; while, if they were true, they would prove a very different point from that which was intended. When we learn, that, in whole counties, as Hants and Wilts, every labourer receives parochial assistance, and hear the disgraceful confession of the system pursued in the payment of wages, is any impression left on our minds as to the bettered condition of the labourer? Can we tolerate the complaints of low prices, high poor's-rates, and the affected apprehension of evil consequences to the labourer, from the continuance of cheap grain? Why are poor-rates increased in purely agricultural districts? Why, under the farmer's increasing wealth, have his servants, for many years past, been paupers?

What are the manifest advantages which the agricultural labourer is to derive from high prices, and which render it necessary that Government should, "for an unlimited period," enact the present restrictive law?

Adam Smith, in speaking of the effects of bounties, had previously asserted, that, in the purchase of foreign commodities, the enhancement in the price of corn might give the farmer and the landholder some little advantage; but, that in the purchase of home commodities, it could give them none at all, because their commodities would rise exactly in proportion to corn, and to the increase of money income. Mr. Malthus, however, supposes a third case, in which, the labourer may derive a positive advantage from high price. "If," says he, "the labourers "in two countries were to earn the same quantity of corn,

yet, in one of them, the nominal price of this corn were "25 per cent. higher than in the other, the condition of "the labourers, where the corn was highest, would be de- "cidedly the best. In the purchase of those commodities, "the raw materials of which are wholly, or in part, foreign, "and, therefore, influenced in a great degree by foreign "prices, and in the purchase of all home commodities, "which are taxed, and not taxed *ad valorem*, they would "have an unquestionable advantage; and these articles, "altogether, are not inconsiderable even in the expendi- "ture of a cottager." This argument supposes, first, that all commodities are regulated by the price of corn; and that the expenditure of the Frenchman, for example, as well as that of the Englishman, is partly composed of foreign purchases. If, under this view, a labourer in France earned weekly a bushel of corn at 10s., and the English labourer earned one at 12s. 6d.; the latter, purchasing articles, of which the price was regulated by the price of corn in France, would be better off than the Frenchman, who must expend his lesser income upon commodities, of which the price was regulated by the dearness of England. This is undoubtedly true. The second case supposes, that two labourers, in two different countries, have, in every respect, the same power, and that, in one of these countries, corn rises, and with it the price of labour, and all other articles, except the taxes. It assumes that, in England, for instance, all commodities do not rise in proportion to that rise of corn, which occasions an increase of wages; that certain taxes, not being laid *ad valorem*, remain stationary under an increase of price in the commodity, and, therefore, that the Englishman, by his rise of wages, has a real increase of power, and an advantage over the Frenchman, whose commodities have suffered no advance. The diminished proportion

which the tax bears to the higher, when compared with the lower price, constitutes the supposed benefit. This view may, also, be considered as theoretically correct. But is the whole argument of any value in its practical application? In order to prove that, under these admissions, the condition of the Englishman is decidedly the best, we must believe that the labourers in the two countries live, in every the minutest respect, alike; and must lay it down as incontrovertible, that the habits of the dearer country necessarily imply a superiority of condition. The imaginary case may not be within the range of possible occurrences, and the assumption may be wholly false. It is unnecessary to illustrate, in this place, the manifest differences which essentially belong to the two conditions. But what are the foreign articles "not inconsiderable in the expenditure of the labourer," which give the higher wages of the Englishman such a decided advantage over those of the Frenchman? They are, according to Mr. MALTHUS, tea, sugar, cotton, linens, soap, candles, and many other articles of convenience and luxury. Let us suppose that the Frenchman and the Englishman consume an equal proportion of bread, or each $\frac{2}{5}$ of his income. The latter would, in this case, have to spend in the above-mentioned articles, a surplus of 7s. 6d., the former of 6s.; or an advantage of 1s. 6d. per week. Admitting, however, the expenditure and the superiority of price, does it follow, that, in natural circumstances, the Frenchman must have recourse to the dearest market for these articles of his foreign consumption? In consequence of the cheapness of labour, may he not obtain them at a lower rate than that at which you can afford to sell them? Or, if accidental circumstances have given you a monopoly, are we never to

admit into our calculations the possible effect of peace, but still to argue upon contingencies that may terminate? This speculative argument, under its necessary modifications, seems to have little weight in a question, which entirely refers to existing habits, and practical consequences.

Another view of the case, by the same author, is still more extraordinary. "As one of the evils of throwing "open our ports, it may be stated, that if the stimulus to "population, from the cheapness of grain, should, in the "course of twenty or twenty-five years, reduce the earnings "of the labourer to the same quantity of corn as at "present, at the same price as in the rest of Europe, the "condition of the lower classes of people in this country "would be deteriorated. And if they should not be re-"duced, it is quite clear, that the encouragement to the "growth of corn will not be fully restored, even after the "lapse of so long a period." If impossibilities were to occur, certain consequences might follow! If, under a partially restricted importation, population would, as is admitted that it must, receive a decided stimulus, the cheapness must be permanent for twenty or twenty-five years! Where are the first principles of political œconomy, and where the argument for new corn laws? Is it certain, that increased demand for corn would not very soon raise its price, by occasioning a relative scarcity? If we admit that high prices are necessary, and that foreigners cannot supply us—the two foundation-stones, upon which the necessity for restrictions is built—would not the fall of wages, consequent upon an increased supply of labour, with a certain demand from the increase of population, give a very early encouragement to the growth of corn? Let Mr. Malthus answer himself, as

he satisfactorily does upon every argument which he has advanced in favour of the Corn Bill. "A period of cheapness necessarily gives a check to agriculture, and encouragement to population; which, of course, prevents "that cheapness from being permanent." But shall an evident advantage be given up, because, at an indefinite period, some temporary injury may, within the range of possibilities, occur? I do not, indeed, at once perceive, that cheapness can deteriorate the condition of the labourer, or, as is supposed, abridge the comforts of the poor, when its conditions admit marriage, and increase of population. I cannot see, that, when high price is a penalty on the indulgence of the first happiness of life, high price can be considered as essentially serviceable to the individual or the country. I cannot discover, that an evident superiority is gained (we are considering the principle alone) by that impediment to such a state which high price occasions, above the usual condition and circumstances of many cheap countries, where the stimulus is always acting. Ask the single labourer, (a mode of argument which has been employed by some of the most violent advocates for increased restrictions,) whether, with the universally admitted power given him by cheapness, to marry, and raise a family, he would not even forego some selfish gratification for this superior comfort and luxury, and whether he would not prefer this present blessing to a condition, which only anticipates the possibility of his existing privations at the distance of twenty-five years? It does not seem reasonable to suppose, that he would refuse a certain period

of benefit, because he may, perchance, ultimately arrive at the very difficulties in which he is, at present, involved.

But the earnings of the labourer are, by the assumption, not to be reduced, under twenty or twenty-five years of cheapness; and, therefore, a total stop is then put to the growth of corn. Were this case possible, could we devise one more advantageous to the labourer—one, in which, with corn constantly at so low a price, that it is not worth the farmer's while to cultivate it, and with other commodities following, though at a distance, the price of corn, he can expend a larger surplus on foreign and domestic comforts? If a case has been assumed of permanent cheapness which can never occur, all the consequences of this assumption must, likewise, be admitted. We can suppose no injury to the remaining classes of society. Arts, manufactures, and commerce, must flourish, because, if they did not, agriculture must proceed, and be the most productive employment of capital. If it were not so, the power gained by an extension of those other modes of investment would, with the supposed cheapness, give the labourer an evident superiority above his present condition. The labourer, however, is supposed either to earn the same wages, or to live under a reduced price of labour. I have considered his situation in both circumstances.

Mr. MALTHUS observes, that it is "a very short-sighted "view, which contemplates with alarm the high price of "corn as injurious to the labouring classes." Why? Because corn has nothing to do with their prosperity, and, if they are extravagant, cheapness can do them no service. "The essentials to their well-being are their

"own prudential habits, and the increasing demand for "labour." In arguing upon the first of these points, it may be permitted me to say, that the rule unquestionably applies, not only to the labouring classes, but, upon the present question, with still more force to those other classes, the farmer and the landholder. It is well remarked by ADAM SMITH, "parsimony, and not industry, is the "immediate cause of the increase of capital;" and till it is proved that a man is poor, because no reduction of expense will make him rich, a point, of which the proof has never been attempted with regard to any of the above three classes, he can have no claim to public protection. But to maintain, generally, that high price is beneficial, because cheapness, by furnishing the means of greater luxuries and conveniencies, may lead to extravagance; that because a man, who has never been able to accumulate, will not accumulate when he can; is arguing for argument's sake. To presume, also, that high price "is "a positive and unquestionable advantage," because cultivation, and demand for labour, cannot proceed under a comparatively lower price, and that the cost of production never can be paid, except upon prices formed by an unnatural and artificial rule, is also to assume that which has never been proved; and with regard to which, it may be possible even to prove the negative.

But, after all, these advantages from high price are, according to the same theory, not to be evident at once. "The high price of corn, when it has had time to produce "its natural effects, is a positive advantage to the la-

"bourer." But what is the natural effect of high price, according to the advocates for new corn laws? A great stimulus to agriculture, and a consequent abundant supply. But does abundance exist, without cheapness? If not, where is the benefit of high price to the labourer? By a restricted importation, a price is supposed to be attained, sufficient to encourage production; of course a greater price than that which purchases imported corn. But next summer, the stimulus having, according to the common view, operated, abundance follows, and its concomitant cheapness. What an evil to the labouring poor, to whom high price is so essentially advantageous! What a curse upon the farmer, to whom low price is, essentially, a penalty upon all cultivation! Cultivation is neglected. Scarcity follows. The usual rise of prices becomes the usual stimulus. Where, then, is the necessity for restriction? Let cheapness have its natural course, let high price produce its necessary effect, and all the desired benefits result, without any legislative interference.

The high or low money price of provisions is, however, said to be evidently a most uncertain criterion of the state of the poor. "Their condition obviously depends "upon other more powerful causes; and it is *probably* true, "that it is as *frequently* good, or *perhaps* more fre- "quently so, in countries where corn is high, than where "it is low." "At the same time, the high price of corn "may be considered as the ultimate check to the indefinite "progress of a country in wealth and population." What a satisfactory qualification, and indeed confutation, of all the previous arguments as to the essential effects of high price!

Let us, however, next enquire, whether the supposed benefits of high price can (considering their actual circumstances) ever really extend to the labouring poor; consequently, whether it is necessary to adopt legislative restriction, in order that they may receive benefit. I think it has been already proved, that the consumption of foreign articles in a labourer's family is not of such amount as greatly to influence his condition, or to apply as an argument for the necessity of new corn laws. Do the poor, or need the poor, consume to a particular amount, are distinct questions, the latter of which will be hereafter considered. What does Mr. MALTHUS say on the former head? "The effect of this high money price would not, "*of course*, be so marked among the very poorest of the "society, and those who had the largest families, because "so very great a part of their earnings must be employed "in absolute necessaries." But are not the poorest the largest number of labourers; and are not those with the largest families most to be pitied and considered, in a question like the present? For a small number of, perhaps, overpaid and unmarried individuals, who want no such assistance, are all the other classes to be burthened with a high price, which must be positively injurious to themselves, and, therefore, to the society of which they are members? Can a price which is, by the most intelligent men, proved to oppress the poorest class, and those who have the largest families, be brought, in sober truth and charity, as an argument in favour of corn laws? That it is possible for a people to be miserably poor, and

some, of them starving, in a country where the money price of corn is very low, cannot be denied. But shall we apply to this blessed country analogies drawn from the anarchies of Africa, the despotisms of Asia, the weaknesses of America, or the misfortunes of some parts of Europe? Is it not certain, that the want of encouragement to productive industry is a great cause of the misery of the lower classes in those countries, and that the low money price of corn, and the distress of the labourer, are only coincident effects, of which the latter is anterior to the former?

In the present question it must not be forgotten, that as cheapness is a relative term, so is likewise high price; and that as the extremes of high price may, (though the proportion has never been fairly allowed,) be considered as injurious, so we may as readily admit the mischief of an extreme cheapness. Cheapness may still be a high price, in comparison with prices which have existed. It may, also, be a high price, which, under a return to more natural circumstances, may be sufficient for all the purposes required by the friends to new restrictions. But a reduction of an artificial high price may take place, without an attempt at the violent measure of a forced minimum. Among these means of reduction may, I think, be classed the wages of the labourer. It is impossible not to conclude, that as many of the arguments for high price do not apply to the generality of labourers, while others are founded upon abuse or error, some reduction might take place in the price of corn by such a moderate reduction in the wages of labour, as would not be injurious to

the labourer, would be followed by none of the predicted mischievous effects, and would, with other means, supersede the necessity for corn laws.

One fact of great importance is disclosed by the evidence, which, when least expected, confirms a theory of Mr. MALTHUS. From the avowal of some witnesses, it appears that the high prices of labour have suspended improvements for some years past. "The peculiar evil "to be apprehended from the high monopoly price of "labour is, that it may diminish the demand; and that it "has this tendency will be readily allowed, particularly "as it tends to increase the prices of exportable commo-"dities." Mr. EASTON says, "that, in 1812, he turned "down his farm to grass, as the only remedy to get rid of "the labour;" and Mr. BAILEY (1814) says, "three or "four years ago, (1810,) the farmers gave over improve-"ments, because the wages of workmen were so high." One witness, a violent advocate for restrictions, confesses that, for the last seven years, he has employed only fifty men on the same land that previously occupied fifty-six.

It is maintained, among several other authorities, by Mr. DRIVER, Mr. A. YOUNG, and Mr. BENETT, that high wages are very injurious to the labourer. If their reasonings, as founded on an abuse, cannot legitimately be brought forward in favour of the principle of corn laws, and of their necessity to the increase of prices, they may, however, safely be brought forward to shew, that when, as in the present instance, the disproportion is said to be considerable, the rate of wages may be reduced, at least without injury. Though we cannot maintain that the

labourers must never have cheap corn because they may become idle, we may say that, if corn is cheap, some possible benefit may result from a reduction of wages.

To what extent should this reduction take place, in order that it may benefit the labourer as well as the farmer? I have already shewn in what proportion his wages should fall, so as to leave him precisely in the same situation with regard to the price of corn as before. The reduction, then, should be something less, in order that he may derive some direct advantage from the low price of corn. From the averages which have been taken, it appears, that the sum paid in wages is 22 per cent. of the whole expense of cultivation. According, then, to the past calculations, in every 100s. which the farmer spends, 8s. 9½d. (or admitting, for the sake of an easier division, a larger proportion than $\frac{2}{3}$) 9s. will be the value of the labourer's bread, or rather more than $\frac{1}{11}$. But if bread falls $\frac{1}{3}$, 3s. per cent. may be taken off, and the labourer will have precisely the same power as before. But, if he is allowed an advantage of $\frac{1}{3}$ of all he spends in bread, then $\frac{1}{3}$ of $\frac{2}{5}$, or $\frac{2}{15}$, will be the positive advantage, which, in this article alone, he enjoys above his former state; while the farmer, in a single instrument of production, is deducting 2 per cent. from his expenditure. This calculation is made upon a low scale, in order to preclude all objections. It will be remembered, that the quartern loaf has fallen from 20d. to 10d.; and that the consumption of bread, in numerous instances, is one half of the labourer's expense.

That a great deal may be done by the labourer himself towards the improvement of his own situation, under a moderate diminution of wages, cannot be doubted; and, in proportion as he improves his condition, will the necessity for corn laws be removed. If the farmer is strangely prejudiced against agricultural improvements, the labourer is still more prejudiced against a variety of wholesome and palatable articles of diet, which would greatly abridge his expenses, while they are, in every respect, calculated to nourish his body, and gratify his appetite. I can only refer the reader to various publications by Sir F. EDEN, Count RUMFORD, and others, who, in reference to the condition of the poor, have made household œconomy their particular study. It is a prominent duty of all such as may be connected with the cottager, to seek out information, and facilitate his means of introducing improved modes of diet. The high value of potatoes, as a substitute for more expensive products of the earth, has been so eloquently pointed out by Mr. COLQUHOUN, Mr. A. YOUNG, and Mr. NEWENHAM, that I make no apology for introducing their observations in this place. "According to the system of feeding the lower orders of "people in Ireland, it appears evident, that, in that "country, a much larger population can be reared and "maintained than in Great-Britain." "If any one doubts," says Mr. A. YOUNG, "the comparative plenty which "attends the board of a poor native of England and Ire-"land, let him attend to their meals. The sparingness "with which our labourer in England eats his bread and "cheese is well known. Mark the Irishman's potatoe

"bowl, placed on the floor, the whole family around it "devouring a quantity almost incredible. No man "can have been often witness of it without being con- "vinced of the plenty, and I will add the cheerfulness "that attends it. When I see the people of a country "with well-formed vigorous bodies, and their cottages "swarming with children; when I see their men ath- "letic, and their women beautiful, I know not how to "believe them subsisting on unwholesome food." "In "Ireland, the increase of population is far beyond the "ratio of increase in Great-Britain. One fourth part of "the extent of land requisite for wheat will in potatoes "supply a family of eight children, without any dimi- "nution of athletic strength. The produce of potatoes "to wheat is as six to one." Were this consideration received with due attention, I have no doubt that the English labourer might live better, and the English farmer have little reason to complain of the low prices of corn. As these and many other improvements are of easy introduction, I can at present admit no necessity for corn laws, to amend the situation of the labourer.

CHAP. V.

THE SITUATION OF THE LANDHOLDER.

HAVING somewhat diffusely considered an important theoretical part of the question,—the rise and progress of rents under supposed natural circumstances,—it is necessary for me briefly to enquire, what is the actual situation of the British Landholder; in order that we may determine, whether he has any inherent claim to protection, and whether his circumstances have been, are, or may be, such as to make it just and politic to adopt this questionable measure of legislative policy. Under circumstances which are highly unnatural, we must enquire, whether his situation, in relation to the other classes of the society, has been such, as to give him a preference, at a moment when it is probable that a more natural order of things may be restored.

In considering the situation of the landholder, the friends of the Corn Bill have, with some precipitation, and without any justice, passed a censure upon its opponents, as if they were actuated by certain narrow and unreasonable motives, and were proceeding upon grounds

specious, but evidently insufficient. Those who view with some distrust the policy, and with some doubt the necessity or efficacy, of an enactment loaded with many mischiefs, the record of which does not belong to the present enquiry, are charged with a disposition to degrade the landed interest from its natural level and importance in society; are believed to have maintained, that all classes of landholders were equally liable to the imputation of avarice and monopoly; and that the reduction of rent alone would do all the services which they expect to result from the combination of this with a variety of other measures. As, however, the abstract importance of the landed interest, from rank, wealth, education, and habits, and from the legislative power, which, by the constitution of the state, it possesses, has never been doubted, so has it, in fact, nothing to do with the question under consideration. We are to enquire, whether, taking all the circumstances together, as "it is a national advantage to purchase corn "cheap," it would, under any circumstances, be treating the proprietors of land with strict impartiality, to expect some reduction of rent, a consequent diminution of expense to the cultivator, and a proportionate benefit to the whole mass of consumers.

That rent is a sacred property, and legal compulsion an absurd and foreign notion; that rents may rise beneficially; that great burthens are borne by the proprietors of land; I admit, in common with the most prejudiced advocates for restrictions. But I maintain, that, in some cases, the increase of rents has borne an undue proportion to the rise of other expenses, and, in others, has been extravagantly

high; and that the reduction of such rents will be one measure of effecting a salutary cheapness, consistently both with comparatively unlimited importation, and with that desirable object, an independent supply of bread corn.

The general character of the landed proprietors, and the small net return for the application of capital to land, has, as in the instance of the farmer, been brought forward by way of argument against any measure, which, like a reduction of rent, is supposed to be degrading and unfair. ADAM SMITH has, it is true, observed, that country gentlemen and farmers are, to their great honour, of all people "the least subject to the wretched spirit of monopoly." He has, however, remarked, in speaking of former Corn Bills, "the country gentlemen and farmers of Great-Britain "so far forget the generosity which is natural to their situa- "tion, as to demand the exclusive privilege of supplying "their countrymen with corn and butcher's meat. They "did not perhaps take time to consider how much less "their interests could be affected, than those of the mer- "chant and manufacturer."

It has, indeed, been said, that the interest paid by the possession of landed capital is very inconsiderable, in comparison with the return made by other property; that, in a multitude of instances, the proprietors do not derive 3 per cent., in a few more $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., in some not $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This argument it seems hardly necessary to answer, because it is very evident, that if, in the opinion of the possessor, the low profits were not counterbalanced by some other evident advantage, from security or influence, capital would not remain vested in land. We know,

however, how general is the wish for this kind of possession, and particularly, with how eager a competition land has been coveted of late years: a circumstance, to which alone, may, indeed, be attributed many of the evils, the existence of which is asserted by the continued and loud complaints of the day. In this view, alone, then, profits may be considered, in some respect, excessive, when compared with those from other investments of capital. Neither does as much proof, as is wished, flow from the fact, that forty-five years ago, the market-price of land was thirty-two years purchase through England and Wales, whereas, in 1811, the general average was 29½. To omit the amazing increase of funded property, we must consider that, in this period of time, other new channels for capital have been opened in various directions, and that the very wealth and immense riches, which have flowed into the kingdom, and which ought, it is said, to have raised the price of land, have not owed their origin to this source, but to the flourishing state of our manufactures and commerce during a portion of that period. It might, indeed, perhaps be proved, that if, in consequence of the American war and its effects, land fell ten years purchase, the riches that have flowed into the country from other sources, have, in fact, raised the price of land very considerably more than in a due proportion, or than might have been reasonably expected. If land fell from thirty-two years purchase to twenty-two, a rise to 29½, all things being taken into account, cannot be deemed a proof of diminished value. But it has been, on good authority, said, that land fell to nineteen or twenty years purchase.

Now if, as is asserted, that was a fall of ten years from its prior value, we have already reached or exceeded the value of land forty-five years ago. In order, however, to decide accurately on this point, it would be necessary to exclude an average calculation, founded on very great inequality of conditions, and to confine ourselves to a period, in which the cause might operate more essentially and separately than at any other during the whole term. During the last seven or eight years, land will probably appear to have almost regained its standard value; and if prices have risen to an excessive height, causes may easily be found to explain that rise, without any inference as to the real depreciation of landed property.

Let us consider what has been, for some years past, the policy and situation of the landholder. In the contrariety of evidence on this subject, we have, as on all points connected with the corn question, the greatest difficulty in approximating the truth. While Mr. JACOB asserts, that, in general, the senseless competition among farmers has not been used as the instrument of raising rents to the full amount that might have been obtained, but that the moderation of landlords has checked rather than encouraged the tendency, which was at one time too prevalent, to offer unreasonable prices for farms; while Mr. SPENCE, and various others, maintain, that the average rise of rents has not been more than equivalent to the rise in other articles, and that the proof lies in the diminished proportion of rent to the produce; while Lord SHEFFIELD denies positively, that rents have generally been advanced, and Mr. A. YOUNG, that "all the power of all the

"landlords upon earth can ever induce a high bidding for "land, unless the farmer expects a continuance of higher "prices," (a position rather irrelevant, if the landholder admits a bidding upon any other presumption,) Mr. BROUGHTON says, that the difference of rents, from 1792 to 1815, proves that the landholders indemnified themselves for the expense of the war; the annual increase of rent being equivalent to the assessed taxes, property tax, and the increased price of living. By this delusion and evasion of the property tax, the landholders, who were the most interested in the late war, contributed the least towards its expense. However natural may have been the desire for this sort of protection, under circumstances highly distressing to the other classes of society, this charge, if true, must be allowed to have some little weight, when we are considering whether there is any farther claim to protection, by the adoption of a measure, which seems to bear hard on some of those other classes.

Omitting, for the sake of brevity, various other opinions on the same side, let us examine the evidence of those witnesses, upon whose authority Parliament enacted the present restrictive law. There is not one, whose declaration does not tend to prove, that rents have, at the lowest, doubled since 1792. Several witnesses very much increased that rate of advance. Mr. BAILEY said they were trebled; HARVEY, better than doubled; EASTON, more than doubled; WEBB, 140 per cent.; CLUTTON, more than double; BENETT, double in nine years; BIRKBECK, 150 per cent., or two rents and half; BRODIE, more than three, nearly four, times increased; MARRYATT, more

than double, and in one instance increased six times, in eighteen years.

But let us see, also, upon what basis landlords have established that rise of rents, which to them has appeared equitable, and in what manner they have obtained protection against the times prices. Mr. DRIVER declares, that, four or five years ago, land was valued on the supposition of corn remaining at 5l. a quarter, and that farmers often bid above that valuation. Mr. EASTON, who has been in the habit of surveying land in five counties, considers the average of lettings at 12s., and extraordinary lettings at 14s. per bushel. Mr. WEBB, who has valued estates for forty years, has for four years fixed the rents at 11s. Mr. BENETT says, that, for eight years, the calculation in Wiltshire has been 12s. Mr. HARVEY last year (1813) valued some estates at 13s., others at 14s. Mr. CLARIDGE, who for 43 years has managed and valued property in all parts of England, says, "a circumstance I have to reprobate in the strongest terms, "is a sort of dissatisfaction some landowners have in "conceiving they do not get quite enough, and, therefore, "they have put it to the public at large to say what rent "they would give; and the man who has given most "has had the land: a practice destructive to landed pro- "perty, in every sense of the word. I exclude all lands "that have been let by auction or ticket, in the ways "lately used, from fair and moderate rents." Mr. WAKEFIELD too says, "in Devonshire, estates have been let by "tender, or public survey, which is not an open auction, "and a very pernicious way." Mr. MAXWELL, after

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fifty years experience in eight counties, says, "persons "have purchased land at enormous high prices, merely "because corn was at so high a price, that tenants could "be found to give exorbitant rents."

These testimonies of some of the most experienced men in the kingdom, and those best qualified to know the fact, are, as it appears, at variance with other respectable authorities. There is, probably, some truth in all the statements, however opposite they may appear. The error in all parties, not excepting the least prejudiced, has been, to assume, as universal facts, circumstances which are only locally true, and to deduce general conclusions, which should have no particular and practical influence. It cannot be doubted, that the landed property of the kingdom is in the hands of proprietors of very different descriptions; that the rents have been modified by the character of the proprietor; and that the tenant has been well or ill at ease, according to the character of those, under whom he has held his land.

It appears, by the uniform testimony of the same witnesses, that, in the period above alluded to, expenses have about doubled. If, then, rents have doubled, the increase may, perhaps, be said to be fair and moderate, though the other classes of society have, it is true, had no such increase of power as that which the landed proprietor has assumed; and though the public annuitant, and many other classes, have absolutely had no other means of meeting this doubling of expense, than by an expenditure diminished in the same proportion. Of this rise, no complaint has been made by the public. In other cases,

the rest of the community seems to urge with justice, that they are not treated with strict impartiality. If expenses have only about doubled, why should the landholder meet this increase of expense not only by double, but sometimes by treble, quadruple, nay sextuple, increase of rent?

The division of the present occupiers into four classes, seems to comprehend all those who can be interested in the question of the Corn Laws, and will enable us to reconcile the above contradictory statements. This division has already been partly made by Mr. BROUGHTON.

The first class comprehends the ancient landholders, the hereditary proprietors of land, the noblemen and commoners of the kingdom, whose general importance and liberality cannot be questioned. It appears from the evidence of Mr. CLARIDGE, that very few large landed proprietors have let their lands according to the system which we reprobated. "Great owners and the nobility of this country "are the cheapest landlords of any persons in the king-"dom." It may, then, justly be presumed, that to this class alone are confined the double rents, which are the lowest in the scale of increase. This increase having been fairly made to meet the increase of expense, may (if the original principle be admitted in favour of the landholder) be maintained, so long as the taxes, and other expenses, remain upon the war estimate, which has given rise to them. But, even in this class, it would be unjust to the tenant or consumer, to fix rents (where leases are granted) at 10s., which, even under the great, and, it is to be hoped, temporary, pressure of the present times, is ad-

mitted to be a sufficient protecting price. The reduction must naturally be in the same proportion, and vary with the variation of the circumstances in which the expenses originated.

The second class is that of the modern landholder: a class, which, in times of doubtful credit and limited means of investment, has transferred its capital to land, for the purpose of realizing a fortune, or deriving an income in the manner which appeared most secure. This class has taken advantage of the rise of prices, and has, probably, advanced its rents one step beyond the last division.

The third class are landholders of considerable property, derived from lines of industry and emolument, of which the returns were quick, and the profits extraordinary. They have brought their habits and feelings into their new occupation and character, and have very frequently countenanced the extravagant biddings of miscalculating tenants.

The fourth class consists entirely of speculators, who have bought to sell again, and whose expectations of great profit have, in too many instances, been gratified by the offers of unwise farmers; offers, upon which have been founded the exorbitant prices which have, in numberless particular instances, been given for landed property.

What proportion these three last classes bear to the first, it is not easy to say. It is, however, clear, that, upon every principle of justice, a fall of their rents must take place, before they can maintain the slightest claim to protection.

There is, indeed, among some of the most zealous friends to the landed interest, a satisfactory concurrence of opinion, that, even under the present burthens, a reduction of rent ought to take place. Mr. SPENCE, whose exclusive devotion to this cause is known, says, "that a "material reduction in the advanced rents, which have "of late been given, must and ought to take place, I have "no disposition to deny. If greatly advanced, the land-"lord must be prepared for a serious reduction, and, for "some diminution even from the rent he received twenty "years ago. The British landholders will not repine at "making these deductions." Mr. A. YOUNG, though he does not say rents ought to fall, admits it virtually, when he says, rents must and will inevitably fall. "Where," says he, "is the rise of rents, when farms are let after "the prices are sunk? No rise takes place, but a fall." Is, then, his whole defence of the landlord's case to rest on the commission of an unjust action? If, during the currency of a lease, he continue to demand a rent under circumstances essentially different from those in which it was granted, but which now must be a means of ruining his tenant, a rent which himself would acknowledge to be exorbitant and injurious, if no such lease existed, can his claim to special favour be established, or his character cleared from the charge of avarice and monopoly? Mr. HUSKISSON, who particularly defends the proprietors of land against these latter charges, maintains, however, that, if peace be permanent, rents must naturally and necessarily fall. I have already noticed the rate according to which this fall should generally take place. Till other

reductions connected with peace arrangements have been made, we cannot accurately calculate the particular amount. The changes which took place in the aspect of European politics during the last year, prevented the correctness of the calculations, which were then founded on a reduction of the property tax.

It has, indeed, been urged by those, who imagine that a restricted importation will keep up the cultivation of the kingdom, that the rate, at which a reduction of rents could take place, is so unimportant, as to be wholly inadequate to the effect of assisting the cultivator. A greater evil, too, it is pretended, would result to the landlord, the tradesman, and the revenue, than benefit to the tenant or consumer. With regard to the effect in lessening the expense of cultivation, it might have been imagined that there could have been no doubt. Without extending to the more moderate rents, which many people, with some shew of justice, pretend must also fall, it is not unfair to say, that, in the other cases, the fall must be in proportion to the rise beyond that rate at which expenses have increased. What, in equity, can be expected more, than that we should guarantee any particular class of society against all the evil effects of all the burthens, which it bears in consequence of the situation of the country? If, then, as Mr. BIRKBECK believes, the general rise has been two and a half, one-fifth part may, without injury, even at present, be removed. If, as other witnesses declare, the increase has been three times, one-third may be deducted. If quadruple the former rents, one half must be allowed.

The mischiefs which must befal the landholder on any reduction of rent, have been described with the same fancy, which has given colouring to all the other evils of a comparatively free importation of corn. Mr. A. YOUNG thinks that the great evil to the landlord is, that the price of the commodities which he consumes, does not fall in proportion to the reduction of rent. If there were any practical or theoretical accuracy in the general argument, nothing being said as to the supposed benefits of high price, this argument will not apply to the present question. Those landlords, who ought to live as they have done, will not be essentially worse off than before. Can the landholder, it is asked, be expected to reduce his income, while the other classes, the stockholder, the merchant, and the manufacturer, retain the full amount of theirs? Does he now enjoy *more* luxuries, accumulate *more* money, or maintain a higher relative station now, than fifty years ago? Is it however, true, that the stockholder, the manufacturer, and merchant have enjoyed the same power as fifty years ago? Is there any shadow of reason in expecting, as a right, that any one class should, after an oppressive war of twenty-two years, enjoy *more* luxuries than before its commencement? Have the landholders, like the other classes, whose incomes have been fixed, and who have had no power of augmenting their capitals, been, for several years, obliged to abridge their ordinary comforts? Have they, like those persons, whose income was always doubtful, been obliged to economize to the utmost, during this whole period of necessary, but unexampled, exaction? Have they, by continual bankruptcy, been deprived, during

a series of dark and unhappy years, not only of comforts, but of many necessaries? Should the positive and comparative advantages possessed by the whole landed interest, during this heavy war, weigh nothing in the scale, when it is proposed to perpetuate their privileges, by a measure, of which the policy is, at best, equivocal, and by an interference, which is generally mischievous? Shall the Legislature, for their sake, extend, for an unlimited time, a standard of price, built solely on the contingencies of a war of unexampled pressure? The defence of this argument has been too feeble to require farther consideration.

It has, indeed, been proved to demonstration, that, under all expected circumstances of reduction, the landlord would still be better off than he was before the war. Mr. NEWNHAM, in his review of the evidence, has clearly shewn, that, at treble rents, and taxes and expenses doubled, the proved rate of increase, the land-owner is much above twice as rich as in 1792; that at $2\frac{1}{2}$ rents, he is just twice as rich, and that, at doubled rents, he is one-third richer, than at that period.

To say that the profits of the landlord cannot have been great, because his proportion of rent to the other profits of the farm is less than formerly, is, in fact, no argument at all. It does not follow, that because the gains of the cultivator are more, those of the landlord are less. To affirm that his share was formerly $\frac{1}{3}$, whereas it is now only $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{5}$, proves, indeed, nothing with regard to his actual advantage, as the amount of the increase of produce is not stated; and even in the natural course of rents, this disproportion will exist, though the land-

holder's share is constantly augmenting. In any calculation, however, as to the losses of the landlord, his own benefit, derived from a lower price in the consumption of his family, whatever it may be, and particularly the advantages resulting from a better distribution of capital, must not be entirely overlooked.

But what effect will the reduction of rent have upon the tenant's expenses? It is generally admitted, that the gross expense is equal to four or five rents. Supposing the rent at four, or $\frac{1}{4}$ of that expense, and the reduction at $\frac{1}{5}$, then $\frac{1}{5}$ of $\frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{20}$. At a diminution of $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{3}$ of $\frac{1}{4}$, increases his profits $\frac{1}{12}$. At $\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{1}{4}$, there is $\frac{1}{8}$ increase of profit.

Let us take the average expense of cultivation according to the fifty-two returns made to the Board of Agriculture, and see to what extent the tenant is practically assisted by these most moderate reductions. It appears from the average result of the fifty-two Reports, that 100 acres of land, paying a rent of 161l. 12s. 7d. per annum, incur, besides rent, other expenses amounting to 601l. 15s. 1d. making the whole cost of cultivation 763l. 7s. 8d., or the rent about $4\frac{3}{4}$. But from the rent severally take $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{1}{3}$, or $\frac{1}{2}$. In the first case it is reduced (32l. 6s. 6d.) to 129l. 6s. 1d., and the whole expense to 731l. 1s. 2d. or rather more than $\frac{1}{21}$. At a reduction of $\frac{1}{3}$ (53l. 17s. 6d.), the rent is diminished to 107l. 15s. 1d., and the whole expense to 709l. 10s. 2d., or rather more than $\frac{1}{14}$. At one-half, the rent amounts to 80l. 16s. 3d., or $\frac{1}{9} + \frac{1}{4}$, reducing the whole expense to 682l. 11s. 5d.

Now taking the average price for 1814 at 73s., or a loss of 7s. upon every quarter at 80s., or $\frac{1}{11}$ of the whole, supposing it to be wholly in wheat, (an extreme supposition,) then the farmer's loss, under the worst case, would be about 69l.; and under a reduction of rent at $\frac{1}{3}$, he would still be 37l. out of pocket. Under $\frac{1}{4}$, about 16l.; and under $\frac{1}{5}$, he would be a gainer of about 11l. upon every hundred acres which he cultivated. Taking this extreme case, can it be maintained, that a reduction of rents would be of no benefit to the cultivator, and that at $\frac{1}{5}$, corn could not be cultivated? It will be said that 73s. is a high price; I answer, that, according to the only authority which we possess, corn has sold at 80s. 5d., and once at 67s. 4d., the average of which is 73s. 10$\frac{1}{2}$d. If the averages are inaccurately taken, as I believe to be the case, there would be at least as much inaccuracy in any calculation founded on the varying estimates of individuals in the several parts of the kingdom. Merely hinting at the feelings, with which particular instances of extreme low price have been forced upon us, I deny that the low price was a necessary one, if causes, foreign to actual importation, had not operated. If a fairer average can be produced, founded on the real circumstances of the year, and not on the weakness and timidity of an insufficient class of farmers, I shall gladly adopt it; and, in diminishing the cost of cultivation, shall depend more upon a reduction of its other instruments, than upon rent. Some important deductions must, however, first be made, in consideration of the extreme case, upon which my original calculation has been founded.

Low rent is said to be unfavourable to good cultivation. This is true, if it alludes to an almost nominal rent. I am fully aware of the benefits of a moral high price in inducing exertion. But under what circumstances is low rent supposed to be injurious? Under an abuse: when a tenant has taken a larger number of acres than he can cultivate beneficially. Can the possibility of abuse be urged against any acknowledged benefit? Shall wholesome food be an evil, because a man may devour more than his stomach can well digest?

But how will a reduction of rent affect the consumer? Taking the quarter at 80s., the annual consumption of each person at one quarter, and the average produce at $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarters; $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarters at 80s., the lowest price at which the farmer can cultivate, make 200s., of which, rent is supposed to be $\frac{1}{5}$, or, according to others, $\frac{1}{4}$. At the former rate we must then reduce $\frac{1}{5}$ of the whole to $\frac{1}{5}$, which is equal to $\frac{1}{25}$, or 8s. The whole diminution is, therefore, to 192s. for $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarters of wheat; and as each will then cost 76s. $9\frac{1}{2}$d., every consumer saves annually 3s. $2\frac{1}{2}$d.; or, on a population of eleven millions, there is, by means of rent alone, an annual saving in bread corn of 1,764,583l. 6s. 8d. If rent be reduced $\frac{1}{3}$, then $\frac{1}{3}$ of $\frac{1}{5} = \frac{1}{15}$, (or of 200s., 13s. 4d.) leaving 186s. 8d. for the whole produce, or per quarter 74s. 8d.; being an annual saving to each consumer of 5s. 10d., or, to the whole number of consumers, of 3,208,333l. 6s. 8d.—Again, at a reduction of $\frac{1}{2}$ rent, $\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{1}{5} = \frac{1}{10}$. One-tenth of 200s. is 20s., leaving 180s. for the whole produce, or per quarter 72s.; being an annual

saving to the individual of 8s., and to the community of 4,400,000l.

These sums may, it is true, at first sight appear inconsiderable. Taking, however, the two extreme suppositions of the labourer, who lives chiefly upon bread, and the consumers at large, the reduction will not appear to be without its benefit. How much it may do, in combination with all the other possible means of reducing the expenses of cultivation, may, hereafter, appear.

Mr. RICARDO, an able advocate for freedom in the corn trade, following up Mr. MALTHUS's reasonings, endeavours to shew, that, if the landlord were to relinquish the whole of his rent, it would neither raise the general profits of stock, nor lower the price of corn to the consumer. He does not, however, pretend, that the consequence would not be additional gain to the farmer. The great mischief would be, that, in consequence of the extent of his gains, he would change situations with his landlord, and instead of converting the additional capital to the benefit of agriculture and the consumer, would set up for a gentleman. If the subject of the profits of stock were not a doubtful one, it might still be said, that this was arguing against the existence of good from the possibility of evil: an argument which the moralist will not readily admit, as it shakes the centre of his belief in many important and comfortable doctrines.

The Committee of the House of Commons state, that rents have nothing to do with the price of corn. The question, however, is not whether, in regulating the price of corn, rents are actually taken into consideration, but

whether, if the farmer's expenses be reduced by this, among many other means, corn may not be afforded cheaper, and the competition with the foreign grower be conducted upon less unequal and disproportionate terms.

That the revenue and manufacturer would suffer no great detriment, from an equitable fall in rents, seems clear from these circumstances; first, that the payment of the same taxes is admitted, under the existence of a moderate rent; and secondly, because what might be lost, by the supposed diminution of income in one class, is transferred into the hands of others, who, probably, will increase the number of their luxuries. If 4,400,000 acres, each producing $2\frac{1}{2}$ quarters of wheat, be assumed as the quantity of land required to feed eleven millions of people, each of whom consumes one quarter annually, and if the gross rental be taken, on a supposed average of 31s. 6d. per acre, at 6,930,000l., a reduction of one-third about will place in other hands 2,310,000l.; an annual sum, which cannot well be misapplied, whether to agriculture, where capital is so much wanted, or to the continued encouragement of inland trade and manufactures. How this can be deemed a ruinous change to all classes of the community, it is difficult to discover.

From any conclusions, then, which I have been able to establish, upon the data which can best be trusted, from any abstract principle, or from the particular case, which the Legislature has thought sufficient authority for the enactment of a new law; there seems no reason, why a certain reduction of rent should not take place on lands of a certain description, or why benefit may not, in the same proportion, accrue to the other classes of the community.

CHAP. VI.

ON AN INDEPENDENT SUPPLY.

WE now come to the last and most important part of the subject, its connection with national policy and interests. "The Legislature has," indeed, it has been most justly said, "nothing to do with securing to any "classes of its subjects a particular rate of profits. It is "not the province of a government to listen to ac- "counts of the gains and losses of farmers and landlords, "though they may certainly see sufficient reasons for "wishing to secure an independent supply of grain." We shall consider this subject under three heads. First, is an independent supply desirable? Secondly, is an independent supply possible? Thirdly, are the Corn Laws necessary to secure such a supply?

As the affections and feelings, associated with the term independence, have some effect in influencing our judgments, it may be well to consider, generally, the terms under which this political condition may be attained, and whether it can safely exist. It may, indeed, be asked at

all times, and never more properly than at present, whether the manifestation of an unreserved confidence in other powers, and the apparent desire of interchange of benefits, would not be politic in a people, secure from attack and injury, but which, during twenty years, has been in a constant state of hostility with all the powers of the world; and whether it is wise or benevolent to avow a dread of the effects of "passion," at a moment when it is of importance to allay heats, and remove the jealousies, which are too natural to rival nations? It may be asked, whether a great example set by a nation, whom the world has been forced to admire, may not, as in a still more important traffic, introduce, as a general national policy, a more unreserved intercourse than has hitherto been known? Whether, after the afflicting disunion, that has existed among the families of the earth, independence is not a harsh and ungracious expression, calculated to raise up suspicion and mistrust? We may enquire, whether freedom and independence are not chimerical? Whether, as mankind is constituted, nation is not necessarily as dependent upon nation, as man upon man? It would not be difficult to prove this necessity, in that increase of moral and physical power, which such a relation has a tendency to create, by the nearer approximation to a perfection, which, however distant, is the end and object of the constitution of things.

It has, indeed, been urged, that as an individual should be ashamed "to beg or borrow," so also should nations despise such means of support. The case, however, of such an individual has no parallelism with that of a nation, that

exchanges commodities, of which it has the natural or accidental monopoly, with others, its attainment of which may be difficult or doubtful. If the principle has any force, it should extend on every side. We should feel ashamed to "beg or borrow" not only corn, but our fine wool, our silks, our cambrics, our laces, and a thousand articles, for which we are indebted to the soil and habits of other countries. In the case of every nation, that procures its commodities by exchange, the receiver and giver are upon exactly equal terms. Mr. WESTERN'S name alone could rescue such an argument from merited neglect.

Neither can we enjoy positive freedom. But to argue against a relative freedom on that ground alone, is to quarrel with that arrangement, which has existed, and been considered beneficial, ever since the establishment of societies. It is "to go strait forward in politics, neither "looking to the right nor to the left," to maintain, that it cannot, under any circumstances, be advisable to receive a benefit, because there are greater benefits, which we cannot attain. If my neighbour limit his services, is it not rather a manifestation of passion than of wisdom, to refuse such as he offers me, and as my wants may require? Is it a policy worthy of a great nation, to give sanction to such exclusive measures by their immediate adoption?

The argument against free trade is, indeed, brought forward at this moment under peculiar disadvantages. Was not a free export from France prohibited with as much severity, and at least equal enmity, during the Imperial war, as since that war has terminated? Did the

most able and circumspect politicians of the day ever consider that war as a reason, why we should not "live upon our enemies," if it were possible so to do? According to all the evidence which we possess, the export trade, from the Baltic, and all other countries, has been limited and restricted by the prices of our own markets. Have we ever thought it advisable, on this general principle, to exclude such a commerce? The advocates for a moderate restriction (I know of none for an entirely open trade) may say with truth, and with effect, "Under free-"dom you have been more dependent; but the conse-"quence has been your acknowledged prosperity. Why "was not the now predicted ruin verified in those days of "almost equal pressure at home, and, as is maintained, of "equal alarm and apprehension?"

The policy of national independence must always be problematical, because it is always doubtful, whether, by such an arrangement, some of the channels of productive industry will not be obstructed. There cannot, indeed, be a more incontrovertible axiom in political œconomy, than that abundance of food alone will not make a nation prosperous; and that, to this end, the resources of industry must become multiplied, so as to make that food accessible. The more labour is employed, the more food you enable the labouring classes to attain; and the greater extent of connection a country has with other nations, the more extended are its means of employing labour, and rendering its abundance salutary. If a single channel of industry be shut up, without the most decided evidence of the tendency of such a measure to restore the equilibrium

in some other way, a positive injury is done to the community. In many cases, the injury may be practical, and the benefit speculative.

In the particular circumstances of this country, it does not seem politic to lessen our resources. It is questionable, whether our commerce and manufactures will be carried on under their former advantages. We cannot positively calculate upon a demand for our productions, equal to that which has hitherto existed. Should there be a lessened demand, and should that balance between the different sources of productive industry, which has induced our present prosperity, be destroyed; should that vast increase of manufactures, for instance, which, according to Mr. Colquhoun, brought opulence to the country, and afforded profitable employment to the mass of the people for so many years, cease to be progressive in the rate of increase of our population, what benefit will the agriculturist enjoy in the permission to raise abundant supplies? Where, under a greatly diminished power of consumption, shall be his reward? What warranty has the country for security in its new and untried situation? Other nations have profited by exclusion, and independence is becoming the dangerous watchword of all governments. The principles of machinery are understood. The secrets of their application may easily be transferred, by interested or unfaithful servants, to rival people; and skill may be acquired. With capital, fortunately, we are still beforehand; and may so continue, if, as much as is in our power, we preserve the relative state so admirably adapted to its production. If, however, a diminution of our commerce were to take

place, shall we trust to the predominance of any other single resource of industry, for the maintenance of our naval superiority? Is there no danger, that our natural defence may be weakened, when the cradle of our seamen is destroyed? The balance between each individual part must be sustained, for the preservation and well-being of the whole; and every restriction, which impedes the natural course of industry, may subvert the very foundations of happiness and security.

That the expected peace will throw a great number of British subjects out of employment, cannot be doubted. It has been calculated, that, of the army and navy alone, above 300,000 will be dependent upon the public; besides those other persons, who, by the consequences of peace, may become incapable of supporting themselves. Is this a period to abridge the means of employing a people, and to hint at independence? Amongst other lines of occupation, should the manning of 2080 ships of 200 tons each, or, as others say, 3600, be despised, or brought forward as an argument against a comparatively free trade in corn? It may also be urged, that, in the present poverty of the Continent, that which we exclude may become an important article of exchange for the products of our own industry. At all events, it is lessening the power of exchange, to prohibit an article common to all nations, and which, in many countries, is superabundant. In refusing a principal article of their wealth, you may put it out of their power, and equally out of their disposition to traffic with you. Admitting even that you pay them in money, on what principle of political œconomy can you receive

injury by enriching a customer, who is thus rendered capable of enriching *you*, by the purchase of your monopolised commodities?

These, and various other such general arguments cannot be neglected, in determining the merits of this question, precisely for the reason which is given at the beginning of this chapter,—because national interests are of more importance than those of any single class of individuals.

I cannot, indeed, help thinking, that many plausible arguments in favour of Corn Laws, have been founded on mistaken views of the question, or erroneous inferences from the premises. It is said, that no nation can be *great*, which is dependent on others for the subsistence of its people. This *may* be true; but there is no evidence of its truth from history, and it does not apply to the immediate question. No nation was ever entirely dependent, for its subsistence, on foreign supplies. Nations have risen to wealth and prosperity, and even glory, under a comparative dependence. The vaunted years of our own greatest national prosperity,—manufacturing, commercial, and agricultural,—as well as of our highest naval and military glory, have been those, in which we have drawn (if that be dependence) larger supplies from other countries, than at any former period of our history. From 1765 to the present time, according to Lord SHEFFIELD, Great-Britain has not only not supplied herself, but has imported vast quantities of bread corn from foreign countries. According, also, to Mr. JACOB, the excess of our exports in eight years, ending 1766, was 2,401,195 quarters of wheat, or an annual average of 300,149 quarters. The excess of im-

ports alone above the exports in eight years ending 1812, was 3,770,387 quarters, or an annual average of 471,293 quarters. Which period will be selected, by the historian, as that of our greatness? Who will deny the coincidence, during this period, of increasing dependence, with superiority in all the conditions which constitute greatness? And whose acuteness shall, by a nice line of separation, attribute their respective influence to various other co-operating causes? To assert that a nation cannot be great, because, of one article of the subsistence of its people, one small part is procured from foreign countries; and that England cannot be great, because, on an average of several years, she has received from foreign soils a single week's consumption, is to deduce from a very insufficient basis most important and unjustifiable conclusions. The fact has been tolerably well established, on the other hand, that the period of our greatest export, when our native supplies were more than sufficient for our demand, was the period of our greatest insignificance; and, if we may believe the friends to the Corn Bill, that, in which our poor were in a much worse condition than they have since been. That our beggars, in the capital at least, were positively more numerous, has, indeed, been proved by a late investigation; and that our population was comparatively stationary, is sufficiently manifest. If, however, this want of greatness was not connected, in the relation of cause and effect, with our agricultural independence, let it not be brought forward upon the present occasion alone, and let us, in our turn, have the benefit of the same argument. Let us be allowed to say that

national greatness may exist in spite of national dependence; and that, if independence does not necessarily bring greatness, so neither does dependence entail subjugation and humility. In so simple a case, why are we forced to shew, that the effect of greatness is ascribable to causes, very different from the circumstance of being dependent, or independent, on other countries for a little bread corn? The substantial prosperity of nations can result only from a continued and effective demand for the physical and moral exertions of its population. It can be derived only from conditions, which call forth latent energies, and give animation to inert and unknown powers. In the eye of philosophy, as well as of religion, the supposed evils of human existence vanish before the lustre of character, which it is their peculiar province to create and support. In this view, the obnoxious state of warfare itself becomes something like a benefit; and the optimist may, without much enthusiasm, trace, in its consequences, some resultiug good. Increase in the numbers of a happy people, and all the other considerable objects of a statesman's care, may be produced by the stimulus of those moral difficulties, that moral high price, which is generally overlooked in the reasonings of political œconomists. These circumstances, while they lead to some sufferance, call forth untried faculties, gratify unknown feelings, and ultimately reward individuals and nations. To situations thus influential let us rather ascribe the progressive greatness of a people, than to an independence, which has not been, and never can be, attained.

"But, allowing that it were consistent with national glory, and that, under favourable circumstances, we could attain the benefits of dependence; we are still, it is maintained, insecure; and security is preferable to wealth or glory. By dependence, we subject ourselves to the caprice and avarice of rival powers, to the possible exclusion by war, to the possible accident of unfavourable seasons, of losses and damage by sea."

Where, however, is the proof, that the security, which we have hitherto enjoyed, can be more effectually promoted by altering that balance of industry, which has, with security, given us so many blessings? Under this disposition, we have flourished. By this we have resisted our enemies, and carried our triumphs into all corners of the globe. Is this a moment to talk of the danger of caprice, when the most capricious and unprincipled of enemies has closed his political existence? or of avarice, when avarice itself has thrown food into our ports, and, in spite of unprecedented enmity, acknowledged its passion and its weakness? Shall we dread exclusion, when, from the Sea of Asof to the Frozen Ocean, every European port has been closed against us, and we have, nevertheless, imported to the extent of our necessities? If, also, this ample supply has been obtained, at a period when our population has increased in a geometrical ratio,—a progress, which, as the causes can scarcely again be coincident, may not again occur,—and when our prisons have been filled with captives, and our streets with aliens, dependent upon us for support, can there be any thing more than speculation, and improbable conjecture, in the

argument which it is attempted to maintain on this ground of independence? We well know, that the occasion to benefit by our necessities has never yet been omitted by our *friends* in the period of our greatest prosperity, and that a necessary limit to undue exaction is placed in the apprehension of losing our beneficial custom. We have tried the perils of war, and the hazards of enmity; and they have had no power to injure us in our commerce of food. Unfavourable seasons may, indeed, occur; but is it probable that such a misfortune would, at the same period, visit the harvests of different countries, differing in aspect, soil, and elevation? Or, if the whole continental market failed us, would America be also unable to supply our moderate requisition? If all these fail us, is not Ireland still able to supply us; or has it ever been maintained, that a restricting price of 80s. was necessary, that *her* wheat cultivation should proceed as heretofore? They may all fail us; but, if we become independent of them, are we more secure than before? Our own produce may also fail. If this were a general evil through the kingdom, and we had no transatlantic or continental friend to assist us, where would then be our resource? It would be at this very period of our real distress, that jealousy or rivalry might, if ever, manifest itself to most advantage. That supply, which we had affected to despise in our abundance, might, on the best pretence, be denied to our urgent necessity. If we had refused to assist the foreigner, by taking some of his surplus raw produce in exchange for our manufactures, or had declined purchasing his surplus with bullion, when we might materially have assisted him, (a

case more than ever likely) to exist for some future years, upon what pretext could "we beg or borrow" in our want, that which might now be ill afforded us? At the earnest request of the unfortunate Louis XVI., we granted to the urgent wants of France, in 1792, a supply, which, from her previous policy, we might have refused the country itself. Loss and damage by sea is possible, but so is it in the transport from Ireland. The danger of injury to wheat appears, from evidence, to be much less than to flour, and it might, on this and many other accounts, be wise wholly to exclude the latter. With our own skill below, and Providence above, we may as safely encounter this risk, as any of those, which, sleeping or waking, hourly encompass us.

Of famine, or insecurity from any of these causes, there seems no ground for entertaining any rational apprehension, and the necessity for what is termed independence, has no sufficient proof.

It is, indeed, argued, that the grand danger of admitting foreign corn is, that, whenever there happened to be an abundant harvest in Europe and America, the supply might be overpowering; and that, at other times, it might not be forthcoming when required. The first evil is temporary, and comparatively trivial; the second is most easily provided against by the facilities which would arise out of the habit of supplying our wants; or, at the worst, is an evil, which, like most others, is ultimately productive of benefit, by driving us back upon our own resources, by encouraging temperance, industry, and efforts at improvement.

A main argument against dependence is, that we could not become dependent. Foreign importation, it is said, could not supply our wants under our actual population; and it is much less likely to do so hereafter, considering our known rate of increase, and the greatly increasing consumption of wheat. Is it pretended, that we cannot expect a supply equal to the amount of our whole consumption? Surely I may omit so extravagant an argument. That our habitual importation has been very inconsiderable, though sufficient for our partial wants, I readily admit. There is no proof, however, that we could not, to this amount at least, continue to receive from our friends the assistance which has not been denied us by our enemies.

On an average of the last eight or ten years, according to Mr. WESTERN, the annual importation of *all sorts of grain*, has been about one million quarters, or about $\frac{1}{40}$ of our consumption. It appears to have never been much more than $\frac{1}{20}$, and, in general, not above $\frac{1}{35}$ or $\frac{1}{45}$. From the Appendix to the Commons' Report, and the Tables taken from thence by Mr. ROSE, we learn that the annual imports for the last twenty years, deducting the exports for the same years, have varied from 4000 to 400,000 qrs.; and that, in five years of scarcity, they fluctuated from 840,000 to 1,450,000 quarters. On an average of all these years, our annual import, including the scarce years, was 525,333 qrs.; or, deducting those years, 235,775 qrs. According to the same Appendix, the whole excess of import for the three years and a half, beginning Jan. 5, 1811, and ending July 5, 1814, taking the exports of 1813 at a medium of the two preceding years, (or 71,326 quarters,)

amounted only to 445,723 quarters; or an annual import of 127,372 qrs. The whole amount of imported foreign wheat in 1814, according to the returns laid before Parliament, was 634,585 qrs. The exports for the first half of that year exceeded the imports; and, during the whole year, amounted to 108,953 quarters, leaving a net amount of 525,632 quarters. The total amount of bread corn imported from Jan. 5, 1814, to Oct. 5, 1815, the latest period to which the Parliamentary Returns are made up, was 192,242 quarters, and the exports were 115,512 quarters, leaving a surplus of 76,730 quarters of foreign corn imported during that year for home consumption. We have, in this statement, sufficient evidence of the small proportion which our greatest foreign supply has borne to our demand, and of the impropriety of the term dependence, as applied to the benefits derived from such a supply.

Taking our average annual consumption at only eleven million quarters, a week's consumption would be 210,959 quarters. The net importation of foreign corn, in 1814 and 1815, amounted, according to this calculation, to an annual consumption of nearly ten days, and the importation of 1814, to that of about seventeen days. If, however, we admit the supposed progressive increase in the numbers of the people, and the increased consumption of wheaten bread, which has been maintained by many writers, and calculate the annual demand, according to my former rough estimate, at twelve million quarters, the importation of 1814 will have equalled about sixteen days

consumption, and that of the two years (1814 and 1815) a consumption of about nine days.

Mr. COLQUHOUN has shewn, that our greatest known importation was during the scarcity of 1801, and amounted to 33⅓ days consumption; and that, including the three years of scarcity 1800, 1801, and 1810, requiring 2005 cargoes, the average importation was only about a single week's consumption. Our whole assistance, then, from foreigners has been trifling, and possibly, with care, need not have existed at all.

It is said, that, admitting the progressive augmentation in our numbers, and the larger demand for wheaten bread, foreigners will not be able to supply us at the same rate. Of this there is no proof. Mr. JACOB has, indeed, asserted, "that he has proved the falsity of the opinion, that, "in case of scarcity at home, either by unfavourable "seasons, by the increase of our population, or by sacri- "ficing our agricultural to our commercial interests, we "might depend upon a supply from abroad, at no other "sacrifice than paying a higher price for it than it would "cost, if raised on our own soil." To me, however, it rather seems, that he has proved the possibility of such a supply, and that he has omitted many circumstances, which warrant the supposition that a still greater supply might be obtained. The question is not whether eleven or twelve million quarters of wheat can be furnished from abroad, but whether, in time of necessity, a certain proportion of this quantity might not be expected.

The facts with regard to our past importations may be seen in the following Tables. No. I. gives the whole

amount of wheat imported from each country with which we have had dealings, during the ten years, 1803 and 1812 inclusive. The second gives the largest quantity of wheat, which we have ever imported in any one given year from the same countries.

	I.			II.	
Countries.	No. of Years.	Total Qrs. of Wheat and Flour.	Average.	Greatest Importation in One Year.	Year.
Denmark & Norway	8	210,022	26,252¾	110,936	1810
Sweden	6	119,895	19,982½	68,398	1810
Russia	10	380,056	38,005 6/10	154,904	1805
Poland and Prussia	9	1,488,653	165,405 8/9	559,628	1805
Germany	9	258,502	28,722⅔	176,464	1810
Holland	8	322,327	40,290⅞	189,016	1810
France and Flanders	7	477,150	68,164⅔	392,864	1810
U. S. of America	9	762,810	84,756⅔	249,713	1807
Brit. N. A. Colonies	10	189,289	18,928 9/10	43,289	1803
Other Parts	10	113,487	11,348 7/10	27,952	1810
				1,973,164	

According to Mr. JACOB's estimate, the whole possible supply which could be drawn, is nearly as follows:

	Qrs.
Northern Ports	593,568
Flanders	1,560,976
Holland	141,536
America	98,000
Total	2,394,080

Upon a survey of these Tables, will any one decide, that, with past facilities, and future prospects, new restrictions can be considered as necessary? The ease, with which we drew supplies, in a moment of unexampled

difficulty and danger, is an extraordinary feature in the period which has passed. Jealousy and hatred opened the ports of France, and of her subject kingdoms, Flanders and Holland; the desperation of Sweden passed away; the resentment of Denmark was forgotten; the Baltic disputed the authority, and dared the vengeance, of the destroyer; the Western Continent, in a nice calculation of her own interests, found an over-balance in her necessities, against the sense of past injustice, and accumulating rancour.

But supposing a case, which has never occurred, that, of our wheat crop, there were, under the present circumstances, a deficiency of $\frac{1}{4}$; could we obtain the supply? We have, it is true, during the late war, never actually drawn in one year more than 1,454,906 quarters; and as 2,750,000 are three months' consumption, at eleven millions per annum, there has been a deficiency of 1,295,094 quarters. Admitting, however, that we could not import three months' supply of wheat in a year of scarcity, are we better off in consequence of having no resource in a moment of such deficiency? As, in the best periods of our prosperity, we have had this resource, and have availed ourselves of it, is there a reason for throwing difficulties in the way of a supply, which, it is proved, we can obtain, and which has been highly beneficial? An approximation to the supposed deficient amount has been rendered probable, by the views which have been offered in the preceding tables; that deficiency might, possibly, with œconomy and wholesome substitutes, be made up, and importation still exist as a real benefit.

It is said, indeed, that, to obtain a sufficient supply of this kind, the ships which crowd our ports, bearing to us the various luxuries of the globe, must be freighted with corn in order to bring us the means of subsistence. If this were true, it might be answered, that nations, any more than individuals, are not born for perpetual enjoyment. How have our revenue and commerce fared under the actual experiment? Have we been deprived of many luxuries, by the mere necessity of importing a supply of bread corn? It must not, however, be forgotten, that, at the periods of our past importations, the commercial power of both continents had been almost annihilated; that their shipping had decreased, in proportion to this condition of weakness; and that peace might, in a variety of ways, materially increase their relative means of assisting us. Neither must we consider all other countries as stationary, besides ourselves. We must take into calculation the effects of an increased energy in all those, with whom we traffick, and a new impetus given to agriculture and production. The capacity of many countries is, perhaps, estimated far beneath its real standard. Whether our own capacity be over-rated, (considering that balance of our productive industry, which, as it has raised us to prosperity, may, in some measure, be taken as our natural balance,) is a subject peculiarly deserving notice. The investigation is, however, too extensive for this place. I may, in the mean while, remark, as additional reasons for believing that a sufficient supply might be obtained under a comparatively free trade, that, notwithstanding the general assumption, it is very probable, that our popula-

tion will not be progressive in the same rate as heretofore; and that a diminished, rather than augmented, consumption of wheat may rationally be expected. The supply of labour has, hitherto, generally preceded the demand; and this disproportion must, for some time, exist in a still greater degree. There can, also, I think, be little doubt, that the wisdom of our neighbours will gradually extend itself to our shores; that potatoes, and other vegetable substitutes, will come into use; and that the inexhaustible stores of fish, which surround us, will not always be suffered to remain unappropriated and unenjoyed. The argument of necessity for the corn laws, from the impossibility of supplying a part of our wants from other countries, seems, therefore, to be of little force.

An important argument, in favour of independence, has been advanced by some of the most respectable speakers and writers, from its supposed necessary effect in the production of low and steady prices of bread corn. Lord SHEFFIELD, Mr. WESTERN, and Mr. SPENCE, besides many other authors, have taken their stand upon this ground. "All experience proves," says Lord SHEFFIELD, "that increase of price is, of all means, the surest to "command plenty, and to render every species of land "produce less dear." Independence is "the only rational "means of securing a steady and reasonable price for the "principal article of subsistence." Mr. WESTERN says, "if we become dependent from many circumstances com- "bined, we should have corn as dear as it has been during "these last few years. It is not the quantity of corn that "can be drawn from foreign markets, that can keep the

"price down for any length of time; that quantity must "ever be small in proportion to our aggregate consump-"tion," and the price will be governed accordingly." "If "the British farmers cannot grow corn under a certain "price, nineteen parts must be paid for at such a rate as "will induce them to continue its cultivation, and the "remaining twentieth will inevitably come up to this rate, "whatever it may be."

In reply to this mode of reasoning, I answer, that the proposed object of independence is to raise the price of corn. It must be acknowledged, too, that the proposed measure is rather a circuitous mode of enjoying a benefit, which we have already, in a direct way, attained, and which, when it arrives, brings with it precisely the evil, against which there is, at present, so loud a cry. If there be any truth in the assertion, that high price is necessary to cultivation, where is the benefit of an independence purchased at much expense, probably with the loss of some good friends, and which, in its advantages, cannot, it is proved, endure beyond a single year? I willingly admit all the facts, but can see no reasonable ground for depriving a part of the community of an evident and actual advantage, because it may, as a reward for this privation, attain a similar advantage twelve months hence; while, in the mean time, the remaining classes are not ultimately benefited by this loss.

The whole reasoning on this subject is, as I have before noticed, amusing. High price is necessary for an independent supply of food; and, as corn laws bring high price,

corn laws are necessary. But corn laws do not bring high price, therefore do not bring an independent supply; corn laws are, however, still necessary. Whether the wisdom of our farmers is such as to allow the practical truth of Mr. WESTERN's theory, can, after the experience of the past year, hardly be a question. That his consequences should follow, cannot be doubted; and, if they did follow, the argument of necessity for restrictions becomes at once void and inapplicable. If the same price is attained, whether we do, or do not, import, it cannot, so far, matter which system we adopt. If British demand governs the price in the countries from which we draw our principal supplies, prices will be the same, whether we export or import; and corn laws can, at all events, have but one evident consequence, that of raising prices at home, as a new standard by which foreign prices may be determined.

Mr. SPENCE goes one step farther. He is not content with importing $\frac{1}{20}$ or $\frac{1}{40}$. "With dependence come its "old concomitants, high and unsteady prices. How, in "the nature of things, can it be otherwise? if we procure "the *greater part* of our supply from abroad." This is as much as to say, that if we attempt what never has or can be accomplished, some unknown evil may possibly result. Such speculative arguments deserve no notice.

Let us pass over a multitude of similar gratuitous assumptions, and attend to the historical evidence on this part of the subject. Let us examine what have been the principal legislative regulations with regard to corn, and

what were the effects of such enactments on prices. I cannot help here remarking, *en passant*, that the sweeping averages of Lord SHEFFIELD, and others, are as uninteresting in theory, as they are entirely unconnected with any proof, and inapplicable to any practical result. In the long period of from 40 to 100 years, the influence of a thousand other causes are operative, which entirely overpower the trifling circumstance of export and import. If these latter have any influence, such an objection cannot be made to the limited term of five or ten years, the term most interesting to the existing society, and that in which some practical application may, if ever, be made. For this reason I have, in the following tables, generally adopted five or six years.

In the year 1670, the first great æra of restriction, by an Act passed Car. II. c. 13, high duties, amounting to a prohibition, were imposed on foreign wheat, till prices should reach 53s. 4d. The prices, for five years from that restriction, were as follow:

	£. s. d.
1670	2 : 1 : 8
1671	2 : 2 : 0
1672	2 : 1 : 0
1673	2 : 6 : 8
1674	3 : 8 : 8
1675	3 : 4 : 8

or an average of 2l. 12s. 7d. in five years; being 10s. 11d. per quarter higher than the year, in which independence commenced.

In 1688, exportation was encouraged by a bounty of 5s. per quarter.

	£.	s.	d.
1688	2	6	0
1689	1	10	0
1690	1	14	8
1691	1	14	0
1692	2	6	8
1693	3	7	8

The average in five years is 2l. 2s. 7d.; which is certainly 8s. 5d. per quarter gained by the exportation. But what was the price in 1687? 1l. 5s. 2d. Was any great advantage then derived in exchanging 1l. 5s. 2d. for 2l. 6s. the first year, or an average of 2l. 2s. 7d.?

According to Lord SHEFFIELD, in consequence of this additional effort at independence, "prices were lower, "and without that fluctuation which so much depressed the "country previous to 1688." Is there a single fact, that warrants this unqualified inference? There certainly was no great benefit in the admitted lowness of price, nor in the rise from 1l. 5s. 2d., in 1687, to the prices which follow. In 1694, again, the price was 3l. 4s. Is there, in our annals, an instance of greater rise, in seven years, than from 1l. 5s. 2d. to 3l. 7s. 8d.; or, if we exclude sudden and accidental demand, and very great scarcities, of a greater fluctuation than marks the prices from 1687 to 1694?

Look at the years which follow this admirable system, of which the effects in lowering and keeping prices steady are said to have been so evident.

	£. s. d.
1695	2:13:0
1696	3:11:0
1697	3:0:0
1698	3:8:4
1699	3:4:0

Compare the 1l. 5s. 2d. of 1687 with these prices, and the fluctuation of the five years from 1695 to 1699, with those from 1669 to 1672, before importation was restricted.

In 1709, importation was suspended, and near 170,000 quarters were exported. What were the prices before and after this measure?

	£. s. d.
1708	2:1:6
1709	3:18:6
1710	3:18:0
1711	2:14:0
1712	2:6:4
1713	2:11:0
1714	2:10:0

Here the fact, coincident with our great exportation, was, in 1709, an excess of price of 37s., and in 1710, of 36s. 6d., above the preceding year. On returning to the system of importation, under its former restrictions, prices began immediately to fall.

In 1745, as we learn from Mr. SIMPSON, an important agricultural occurrence took place,—the distemper among horned cattle, which gave rise to an unlimited licence to plough. It is said, that, in consequence of the loss of half

the cattle, most of the *best* lands in the kingdom were ploughed in this and the two following years. Our independence advanced rapidly, and export immediately increased to a great excess. Prices were as follow:

	£. s. d.
1743	1:14:10
1744	1: 4:10
1745	1: 7: 6
1746	1:19: 0
1747	1:14:10
1748	1:17: 0
1749	1:17: 0

or, in the four years subsequent to the above-mentioned event, an average of 1l. 17s.; being a rise of 12s. 2d. per quarter above 1l. 4s. 10d., the price before the present export commenced. As our export in these years is said to have been immense, we may fairly conclude that there was abundance at home. Here is, however, little in favour of cultivation, as productive of low prices. The important remark may, indeed, be made, that prices never again fell to 21s. 10d.

In 1757, export was suspended for two years, and there was a fall of 10s. per quarter.

	£. s. d.
1757	3: 0: 0
1758	2:10: 0
1759	1:19:10

In 1759, export was resumed, and continued, to a great extent, till 1766.

	£. s. d.
1760	1 : 16 : 6
1761	1 : 10 : 3
1762	1 : 19 : 0
1763	2 : 0 : 9
1764	2 : 6 : 9
1765	2 : 14 : 0
1766	2 : 8 : 6

In the second year there was a fall of 6s. 3d. per quarter; but the average of seven years of great export was 2l. 7s. 3d.; being a rise of 7s. 6d. per quarter above 1759. In 1765, export was prohibited; and importation allowed, duty free.

	£. s. d.
1765	2 : 14 : 0
1766	2 : 8 : 6
1767	3 : 4 : 6
1768	3 : 0 : 0
1769	2 : 5 : 9
1770	2 : 9 : 0

The average of five years was 2l. 13s. 6d., or 6d. per quarter lower than the price of 1765. In 1773, the prohibitory duties of 1670 were reduced from 53s. 4d. to 48s. Did this increase the price, as is maintained by so many intelligent men?

	£. s. d.
1773	3 : 6 : 6
1774	3 : 2 : 0
1775	2 : 17 : 9
1776	2 : 8 : 0
1777	2 : 15 : 0
1778	2 : 9 : 6

or, in five years, an average of 2l. 14s. 5d.; 12s. 1d. per quarter less than the price of 1773. The prices of 1779, 80, 81, and 82, were 2l. 0s. 9d., 2l. 8s. 6d., 2l. 19s., and 3l. 0s. 6d. Upon these prices we may remark, that the price immediately fell, and continued to fall, with little variation, for six years, when it rose to 60s., or 6s. 6d. less than in 1773; and that, from this period, for twelve years, it never rose to the price at which it had been when the restricting price was reduced.

In 1791, the importation price was raised to 52s. 6d., and with it the average of prices rose also.

	£. s. d.
1791	2 : 15 : 0
1792	2 : 13 : 0
1793	2 : 12 : 4
1794	2 : 14 : 0
1795	4 : 1 : 6
1796	4 : 16 : 0

or, in five years, an average of 3l. 7s. 4d.; being a rise of 12s. 4d. per quarter above the price when increase of importation price took place. I may here notice that the prices have, hitherto, been taken from the Eton tables, so often quoted on the corn question.

It is evident, that, as the object of the present enquiry is to establish the relation of prices alone, and not the real price itself, the principle is not affected by the difference which is found to exist in the general averages of the kingdom, and the tables upon which the preceding calculations have been founded. In order, however, to preclude all possible objections to the last estimates,

which may be considered as unfair, inasmuch as the price of 1796 is reported to be that of the best wheat at Lady-day, and the Winchester bushel was substituted for the Windsor bushel from the year 1793, I subjoin a table founded on the general averages themselves.

	£.	s.	d.
1791	2	9	4
1792	2	2	11
1793	2	8	11
1794	2	11	8
1795	3	14	2
1796	3	17	1

By this statement it appears that the average of the five years, subsequent to the increase of importation price, was 2l. 19s.; or an advance of 9s. 8d. per quarter beyond the price of 1791.

The following calculations are founded on the prices in the Appendix to the Commons' Report.

In 1796, unlimited importation was allowed free of duty, and large bounties were given, till a certain quantity should be imported. Accordingly, importations took place, to the amount of 2,051,481 quarters in four years.

	£.	s.	d.
1796	3	17	0
1797	2	13	0
1798	2	10	0
1799	3	7	6

an average of 2l. 16s. 10d.; being, in three years from the period of unlimited import, a fall of 1l. 2s. per quarter.

The scarce years of 1800 and 1801, which gave rise to excessive importation, again reduced the prices of wheat in the three following years.

	£. s. d.
1800	5 : 13 : 7
1801	5 : 18 : 3
1802	3 : 7 : 5
1803	2 : 16 : 6
1804	3 : 0 : 1

Average 3l. 1s. 4d.; or a fall of 1l. 16s. 11d. per quarter, from 1802 inclusively.

In 1804, the protecting price was raised to 63s. Did the supposed necessary consequence, the fall of prices, ensue? The sum specified was considered sufficient, as being 2s. 11d. above the price of the current year; and 6s. 6d. higher than that of the preceding year. Unfortunately for the argument, prices advanced as follows:

	£. s. d.
1804	3 : 0 : 1
1805	4 : 7 : 10
1806	3 : 19 : 0
1807	3 : 13 : 3
1808	3 : 19 : 0
1809	4 : 15 : 7
1810	5 : 6 : 2
1811	4 : 14 : 6
1812	6 : 5 : 5

In 1811 and 1812, when our prices were so enormously high, we were not indebted, according to Mr. WESTERN, for any part of our consumption. Our exports exceeded our imports. According to Mr. MALTHUS, too, in 1811,

the exports rather exceeded the imports; and, in 1812, the balance of imports was only about 100,000 quarters. These prices and these facts sufficiently contradict the theories of a multitude of advocates for restricted importation.

It may be said that there were other causes for this rise of price. I am very well inclined to believe, that export and import have an inconsiderable influence upon prices, and that they ought to have a still less. Let me, however, have the advantage of this argument, when it will serve my purpose, and let not coincident effects be brought as proofs of the necessity for restricted importation. No proof has ever yet been adduced, that restricted trade is essential to lowness of price. Neither has any sufficient evidence appeared of this necessity for avoiding fluctuations of price. If history tell us a different story, why should the fallible opinions of any authors induce the belief, that such a necessity will ever occur?

In order to shew the bad effects of mere theory, we cannot do better than attend to the observations of Mr. MALTHUS, who seems to believe the possibility of two directly opposite effects from a state of dependence. "It must be "allowed, that it is not in the nature of restrictions per- "manently to secure steadiness of price. A free trade in "corn would, in all ordinary cases, not only secure a "cheaper, but a more steady, supply in grain." "If," says the same author, "the ports were open, there is every "reason to believe that the fluctuations of price would be "much greater. Such would, at least, be my conclusion "from theory; and I think it has been confirmed by the

"experience of the last hundred years." Our greatest importations, during this period, were from 1792 to 1805 inclusive; and he thinks that, in no fourteen years of the whole period, the fluctuations were so great.

There are several reasons, why this view of the question does not seem entirely fair. The whole period was one of very peculiar and unusual circumstances; and there is, in our history, none more marked with a wavering policy with regard to export and import. In the year preceding 1792, a higher protecting price had been adopted. In 1796, an unlimited import was allowed, and even bounties given till a certain quantity was imported; a circumstance which must have had a sudden and extensive effect on prices. In 1804, an increased duty was set on importion; which was immediately followed by a rise of 27s. 9d. per quarter in the price of wheat. During this period, two or three years of excessive scarcity occurred; and it is probable, that, had we depended on our home produce, prices would have reached double their actual amount. It has been well remarked, by a modest and sensible author, who is a friend to the Corn Bill, that the "unusual "frequency of blights, and the extraordinary and sudden "demands for our naval and military establishments for "our armies in the Peninsula, and even for our colonies, "do not allow this period, at least in respect to many of "the years of which it consists, to form a criterion, by "which we may safely decide the question." The variations in the value of gold and silver must also, during this period, have sensibly operated as unusual causes of fluctuation of price. Although, therefore, I am willing to admit

the fact, which is but just within the limits of truth, I deny that any safe conclusions can be drawn, as to the influence of the assigned cause, in producing its specific effect. If, however, under all the increase of difficulties, importation continued, and caused a great fluctuation of prices, this circumstance seems clearly to shew what is the most congenial habit, and the peculiar tendency of the country, under its own natural disposition of industry; and it is thence rendered, in some respects, probable, that, if left to itself, Great-Britain would not depend on its own produce for the support of its people.

Let us, however, for argument's sake, admit the propriety and obligation to become independent; has this country the means of reaching that desirable state, and are the corn laws necessary to its attainment? Independent! Was ever country so adapted to independence, and did ever country, with such capacities, so strangely neglect the occasion of independence? What palpable improvements are introduced amongst us, without a long and wearisome struggle? Or what evident policy, without resistance? Shall we argue upon the necessity for corn laws, against a trifling or unproved injury, while agriculture is surrounded with trammels, and while the lion might be freed from its fetters by the feeble efforts of a mouse, were not that friendly instrument of release neglected and despised. Who has shewn any real mischiefs from the assigned cause? And what superficial observer might not point out numberless evils in other existing regulations, and the abuses which surround us? Shall we set aside a system, under which we have prospered, and

leave untried all the benefits, which may result from a correction of abuses, and the introduction of a wiser management of our native resources?

Let us briefly consider the actual circumstances of the country, its capacity, and the obstacles which are opposed to its improvement.

In the year 1811, the population of England and Wales amounted to 10,488,000 persons. If we calculate at the same increase (fifteen in ten years, or annually 1½ per cent.) the augmentation to May 1, 1812, would be 157,320, or a total of 10,645,320: to May 1813 about 159,679, or a total of 10,804,999: to May 1814 (162,073) about 10,967,072: to May 1815 (164,505) 11,131,577. Taking the usual annual allowance of one quarter per person, and the produce, as before, at 2½ quarters, the total number of acres required annually for the production of wheat is 4,454,272. But as the same land, according to the present system, comes under wheat only once in four years, there must be 17,810,520 acres capable of bearing wheat, in order that the country may grow a sufficient supply for the present estimated population.

Now the total cultivated lands in England and Wales have been calculated by Mr. Colquhoun at 30,620,000 acres; and if we deduct the portion in wheat, there will remain 12,809,480 acres for pasture and other purposes. There are supposed to be also of uncultivated lands in England and Wales, 6,714,400 acres, of which only 5,500,000 are capable of cultivation. Supposing these to be cultivated, according to the present system and averages, at how distant a period, under the same progressive increase

of population, would the whole be under wheat culture, and a check be put to population, from the deficiency of a supply in England and Wales? As, according to the four course system, only 1,375,000 acres of the yet uncultivated lands could be kept constantly in wheat, this check would occur when to the present population there was an addition of 3,437,500 persons; making a total amount of 14,570,077 in England and Wales. To produce this addition, at the present rate, would take eighteen years from May 1815, or bring us to May 1833; when the population would be about 14,552,744, at an annual addition of 1½ per cent.

But Ireland offers an almost inexhaustible supply of wheat for many years to come. According to Mr. NEWENHAM, this country, in the year 1805, contained 5,395,456 inhabitants; having, in the last one hundred and eleven years, increased 166⅔ per cent.; thus doubling itself in forty-six years; while, during the same period of one hundred and eleven years, Great-Britain has increased only 100 per cent. To this add, that either by the wise choice, or fortunate accident of its diet, which requires one-fourth less of land in order to support an equal number of its robust inhabitants, Ireland has in tillage only 13,454,575 acres out of 19,439,960.

Scotland, too, by her native energies, and admirable docility, in spite of an ungenial climate, and generally a sterile soil, "has already so far advanced in improvement, as "to supply considerable quantities to the London market."

This is a rough sketch of the power which Great-Britain possesses, in point of surface, for the subsistence of

her inhabitants. If some deductions must be made for lands required for other purposes than mere wheat culture, we must remember that agriculture is still in its infancy, and that not $\frac{1}{20}$ of the kingdom is cultivated to the degree of which it is capable. We must admit a large increase of capacity from increase of quantity and improved quality of produce, from the adoption of other articles of diet, and the reduction of the vast numbers of unprofitable horses, kept as well for agriculture, as for purposes of pleasure. I have already observed, that there is no reason to believe that the demand will, as heretofore, exceed the supply. It is rather to be feared, that we shall not have the means, or be wise enough to adopt the means, of employing the industry of our population, in such a way as that this employment shall become a stimulus to its increase.

With regard to the other purposes, besides the production of wheat, to which, in a national point of view, an attention is highly necessary, we must not overlook the demands of our navy. It is established as a fact, and for reasons easy of explanation, that much of the British grown oak is peculiarly adapted to ship building, and has the decided advantage over the timber grown in the dense forests of Canada and Germany. It has also been proved, by unfortunate experience, that the fine oak of the Morea, Albania, Dalmatia, and Croatia, is inaccessible when most required, or liable to seizure and loss, when we are most dependent for a supply. It is still further ascertained, first by a Committee of the House of Commons 1771, subsequently by the Commissioners of land revenue in 1792, and still more recently by Mr. Fordyce, that

the woodlands in general of Great Britain, and plantations of oak in particular, have diminished in proportion as the population and prosperity of the country have augmented. The soil, which the oak most affects, is that which is peculiarly adapted to wheat. It has been calculated, that in order to keep the navy in its present effective state, (and "fatal, indeed," it has been observed by the author of the excellent article in the Quarterly Review (Sept. 1812) "would be the delusion, which should tempt "our governors to reduce the navy, and transfer our "reliance for protection from its wooden walls, to mar-"tello towers, subterranean shafts, and military canals,") there must be constantly standing 102,600 acres of oak plantations, and an annual felling and planting, in perpetual rotation, of 1140 acres to meet the consumption of the navy alone. As this consumption is only $\frac{1}{70}$ of that required for other purposes of safety, wealth, and glory, of which the merchant and East-India Company's service exceed the demands of the navy nearly seven times, it follows, that 1,026,000 acres of land best adapted to the growth of wheat, are annually required for oak timber alone. A large surface of land may, also, become necessary for the cultivation of hemp; a plant congenial to our climate, and for which we have been hitherto wholly dependent on foreign countries. It cannot be denied, that to provide these means of our security, is an object of paramount importance, compared even with any necessity of raising a supply of wheat upon our own soil. For that article of subsistence there may be found many substi-

tutes of equal benefit and value, while we have no resource under a deficiency in these best means of our defence.

As, however, it is certainly not by an excessive cultivation of waste lands, that a nation can derive all the advantages which may be expected from an increased production of the food of man, so it may be questioned whether all the lands, which have been hitherto employed in wheat, can, consistently with national advantage, continue to be applied to that purpose. It appears that a very large proportion of our wheat is of inferior quality, and, for this reason alone, sells at a low price, or no price at all; while the proportion of superior samples at home, according to all reports, has very much exceeded, and now, from abroad, continues to exceed, that of our present produce. Whether the striking disproportion of prices in the same day, at the country markets, be owing to accident, bad and insufficient cultivation, or to the employment of land not suited to the growth of wheat, is not satisfactorily determined. That the latter has its share, as a cause, cannot be doubted. Neither can it admit of a question, whether, by confining cultivation to the best soils, a larger produce of more nutritive food might not be obtained.

From all the evidence, which can be collected, it appears, that, within these sixty years, a very great increase of cultivation has taken place. According to Mr. Colquhoun, the produce of the soil in England has more than doubled, in Scotland certainly trebled, in Ireland has increased more than four-fold. The most rapid progress, has, however, been made during the last twenty years, in which period, many sterile soils have been applied, at so

great an expense, to the production of wheat, that our farmers, with every thing in their favour from high prices, and the attainment of unexampled agricultural prosperity, have never, as they pretend, been able to accumulate capital enough to protect them in a single year of difficulty. By examining the evidence before Parliament, as to the lands which, it is apprehended, from the expense of their cultivation in wheat, may be neglected, we shall learn what lands have been last cultivated, and those of which the culture constitutes the great improvement during these latter years. After considering all that has been said on the subject, I cannot help thinking that one of the greatest advantages, which would result from an unrestricted importation of wheat corn, would be the greater difficulty which would attend its acquisition. It is evident that only the best and richest soils would be applied to its culture; while, from the extensive tracts of ungenial land, which would then be applied to purposes, for which they are better adapted, and from the inadequacy of importation to supply the existing demand for wheat, the habits of the country might, in some respects, be changed, and the adoption of potatoes, and other salutary and cheaper articles of diet, might realize the best wishes of every enlightened lover of his country.

The improvements, which have taken place, are of a two-fold nature. They have consisted, first, in the application of a higher state of farming to lands, which were already under culture, so as to have greatly increased their produce; and, secondly, in the cultivation of lands, which were previously considered as unfit for tillage. These

latter have been lands of an inferior and poor quality; such as strong, cold clay lands, light sandy lands, "barren ridges," and marshes. The Report of the Committee observes, as I have elsewhere shewn, that a very considerable proportion of wheat is now raised on the cold clay, or waste and inferior lands, on which that grain cannot be grown, but at an expense exceeding the average charge of its cultivation on better soils; and that, as such lands, when withdrawn from tillage, would, for many years, be of very little use in pasture, the loss from such a change as well to the occupiers, as to the general stock of national subsistence, would be very great. We have, however, no means of ascertaining the amount of these inferior lands. Mr. JACOB, in one passage, says, the better lands are only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the whole. In a second, that the inferior lands are $\frac{4}{5}$, and in a third, $\frac{1}{2}$ the corn bearing lands of Great-Britain. This is vague enough. If, as Mr. CLARIDGE states, there is only a proportion of $\frac{1}{5}$ or $\frac{1}{6}$ the loss of such an amount would be inconsiderable. It is, however, observed by Mr. DRIVER and others, that, of these heavy clay lands, on which turnips will not grow, only $\frac{1}{5}$ of the farm is in wheat, whereas the proportion ought to be $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$. According to this witness, it would not answer to abandon the culture of these soils, because you must get a crop and a half on the rich lands, to make up the loss of the half crop on the inferior ones. This does not seem quite correctly stated; because, if the recurrence of the wheat crop is much less frequent upon the bad land, the quantity produced upon those which are in wheat every third or fourth year, is already much nearer than one-half

to the proportion required. If in three years one acre produces three quarters; and, in five years, another produces only twelve bushels; an addition, not of twelve bushels, but of $7\frac{1}{2}$ bushels or little more than $\frac{1}{6}$, is necessary, in order that the good land may produce an amount equal to that of the whole land formerly in tillage. If in four years the same produce is obtained, then an addition of $9\frac{3}{4}$ bushels is necessary for the same aggregate production of corn. But of rich lands that exceed 8 qrs. per acre, there is probably a larger quantity, than of poor soils, which produce more than twelve bushels.

That large additions might be made to the greatest part, even of the superior soils of the kingdom, there is little reason to doubt. Mr. WESTERN considers the difference between high and low farming as, at least, one quarter per acre. Other witnesses think it admits, at least, a double produce. If, however, this increase were possible, the inferior lands would be at liberty for any other suitable crops, and their produce would be so much clear gain to the stock of subsistence. If, as is stoutly maintained, in the clay soils which now produce wheat, and are unfit for green crops, a fallow before wheat is indispensable, we must deduct so much from the annual power of the country, during their cultivation in wheat.

Other evils seem to occur from the cultivation of these inferior soils, and the necessity which has occasioned it. There is strong evidence, first, that upon many of these soils, not only the quantity is trifling, but the quality not comparable to that, which is grown on better land; secondly, that overcropping has, in many instances, done

injury to the land; while, at the same time, the capital, which might have been very advantageously employed on other soils, has been improvidently expended. It has been observed, that, as the quality of sample depends upon the quality of the soil and climate, the wheat of many high countries is of an inferior quality. In the reclaimed marshes of Lincolnshire, which have been almost exclusively turned to the production of corn, a great deal of land has, according to Mr. MAXWELL, been cropped till it is quite exhausted, and will no longer pay the expense of labour, much to the loss of the country, and the injury of the land itself. From the evidence of Mr. WAKEFIELD and Mr. GRIERSON, this seems to have been much the case in Ireland. The latter mentions instances of five successive crops of wheat, till the ground could bear no more. The former thinks the improvements in that country far less considerable than has been imagined, though, in consequence of requiring little corn for their home consumption, the Irish have been enabled to export all the additional quantities that have been raised. The Irish wheat of the best quality is not superior to the average quality of the English; and though, by better husbandry, improvements may take place, it seems to be the opinion, that the wetness of the climate is adverse to the production of a fine sample of corn. The general substratum appears to be limestone; there are few strong clays; turnips are hardly known; and a vast deal of mountain land is now producing corn, that a few years since was in a state of heath. It appears too, with regard to England, that "there is evidence in the

"interior and south of the country, that the average pro-
"duce has declined from thirty to twenty bushels, and
"in 1813, a year of plenty, to sixteen."

Will any one maintain, that the application of capital to the better lands, which have often suffered more than in proportion to the gain from the new soils, the production of an equal, or nearly equal, amount of bread corn of an improved quality, and the clear gain of a large number of acres, which may be advantageously applied to other culture, are a waste of the national resources? The wisdom of Parliament has decided otherwise. By disregarding the recommendation of their Committee, and assuming a protecting price, which is proved to be inadequate to the cultivation of these lands, they have, if any part of the testimony on which they have founded their enactment be true, put a total stop to so ruinous a system of cultivation, and so improvident an expenditure. As they have virtually determined that such lands shall not be continued in the cultivation of wheat, one of the grand arguments for the necessity of restricting laws is at once set aside. If, however, the opposite testimony of Mr. A. YOUNG be considered as of importance, if the stiff clay lands, so adapted to the growth of wheat, will, in spite of all difficulties, be retained in cultivation, of course legislative interference becomes still more superfluous.

I heartily concur in the belief of the possible independence of this great country; but I cannot see either the necessity of continuing the cultivation of wheat in all the lands, on which it has hitherto been unprofitably raised,

or that of restricting importation, for the attainment of this important object.

We come, now, to the consideration of the means, which seem adapted to the production of such a salutary abundance and cheapness of subsistence as shall, of themselves, satisfy all classes of the people, and render legislative provision unnecessary. Till the numerous difficulties which impede the progress of agriculture be, as far as lies in our power, removed, the consideration of a measure, of which the policy seems, at least, questionable, cannot in justice, be admitted. Every one is loud in complaints of the evils which the agriculturist has suffered, and is obliged to undergo; and the majority is disposed to attribute to a single trifling and inadequate cause, an effect, which is more satisfactorily assignable to an extensive combination of circumstances. I shall join my voice with the few who take another course; who, if England is weak, trace the sources of her weakness to her own misconduct, to the trammels thrown around her by her best friends, and to prejudices which ought to be eradicated. In as brief a manner as possible I shall hint at some of these obstacles, which seem to me to oppose the course of independence, and which may be divided under different heads, as proceeding from Government, the landholder, the farmer, the labourer, and the habits of the country.

The obstacles which seem remediable by the assistance of the legislature alone, consist principally in taxes, the system of poor laws and of tithes, the game laws, the procurement of bills of enclosure, certain restrictions on

farming industry, the total inattention to that education in the agricultural classes, which in trade and manufactures is injurious by its excess, and the laws relative to estates in tail and under trust. Most of these have already been well treated by many authors. I shall only dwell on those which chiefly merit attention.

Though it has never been imagined that even the entire removal of the taxes, which deduct from the power of the farmer, would relieve him under all difficulties, yet the best friends to the Corn Laws admit that they prevent accumulation and improved cultivation, and, in such a light, are objectionable. The direct taxes on agriculture are, the property tax, the land tax, poor rates, highway rates, and tithes, which, with the landlord's property tax, are supposed, by Mr. A. YOUNG, to lay a burthen of 24s. 9d. on every acre paying 40s. According to another author, on every acre paying 30s. rent, as only one crop of wheat is taken in four years, these taxes amount to 44s., or 2s. 2½d. on every bushel of wheat; while, including the indirect taxes derived from the duties of the customs and excise, on houses, windows, horses, leather, and almost every article in use, the whole tax on every bushel of wheat is estimated at 8s., of barley 2s., of oats 1s. 9d. To what extent, or whether any of, the present taxes can be reduced, is a question which can be determined by the Legislature alone. As, under the imperfect and mistaken policy of the Allies, nothing seems, at the present moment, less likely than a durable peace, we can, as yet, hardly promise ourselves the benefits of a peace establishment. Should this blessing eventually be considered as secure,

it seems most probable, from the past expression of feeling in the country, and the disposition of Ministers, that the property tax will be abandoned on the earliest opportunity. It cannot, however, be doubted, that this tax, if honestly managed, would be the most equitable of all taxes. That it has been neither a duty on property, nor even on income, has been the loud complaint, not only of the farmer, but of all classes of British subjects. If, by the spirit of this Act, it be determined that a farmer must necessarily make a profit because he engages to pay a rent, nothing can be more oppressive than such an assumption. In equity, however, the farmer has no more reason to complain of this tax, than of the assessed taxes; nor is there the shadow of a reason why he should not bear his share of both, as well as the rest of the community. If the landlord has thrown his property tax into the rent, the proceeding is unjustifiable, but Government has nothing to do with the transaction. That some of the assessed taxes bear upon the farmer is true; but upon whom do they not bear? The excise upon malt has deprived certain agricultural persons of a wholesome and exhilarating beverage. The duties upon leather, horses, &c. are so many deductions from the farmer's power, and, though individually trifling, make up a heavy aggregate expense, and, perhaps, in some instances, might be transferred, with advantage, to other less obnoxious articles.

The evils attendant on the existing system of poor laws have been deprecated by innumerable proofs, and unanswerable arguments. Amid the hurry of never-ending warfare, this system has grown up into a neglected and

almost remediless mischief. It may, indeed, be considered as one of the greatest injuries, which has resulted from our late situation, that, in an important class of society, the moral feelings connected with, and formed by, independence of character, have been, by law and custom, reduced almost to a state of annihilation; that the growth of vice has been in proportion to the bounty upon idleness and extravagance; and that the most serviceable uses of productive industry have been perverted, by a system as impolitic and iniquitous in its effects, as radically defective in its principle. These evils have been so forcibly described by Mr. Pitt, in one of his best speeches, that I shall perform a valuable service to my readers in employing his clear and animated language. "The poor laws, however wise in their original institution, "have contributed to fetter the circulation of labour, and "to substitute a system of abuses, in room of the evils which "they humanely meant to redress; and, by grafting upon "a defective plan defective remedies, produce nothing "but confusion and disorder. The laws of settlements "prevent the workmen from going to that market where "he could dispose of his industry to the greatest advan-"tage, and the capitalist, from employing the person who "was qualified to procure him the best returns for his "advances. These laws have at once increased the "burdens of the poor, and taken from the collective re-"sources of the state, to supply wants, which their ope-"ration had occasioned, and to alleviate a poverty, which "they tended to perpetuate. To promote the free cir-"culation of labour, to remove the obstacles by which

"industry is prohibited from availing itself of its resources, "would go far to remedy the evils. The advantages "would be widely diffused, the wealth of the nation "increased, the poor man rendered not only more com- "fortable, but more virtuous, and the weight of the poor- "rates, with which the landed interest is loaded, greatly "diminished. I should wish, therefore, that an oppor- "tunity were given of restoring the original purity of the "poor laws, and of removing those corruptions, by which "they have been obscured." We have already seen that the beneficial measures proposed under this liberal and enlightened view were not successful. If, however, in the time of Mr. PITT, the attention of the Legislature to these matters was necessary, how much more incumbent upon them is the duty at present, when the poor-rates, amounting to an annual income of seven millions sterling, equal the revenue of the empire of Russia; and when, by an unwarrantable abuse, one class of society has forced their own servants into a loathsome dependence on charity, and assisted in their moral degradation! Till these impediments in the way of national industry be removed, the facilities of raising an independent supply will not be perfected, and the necessity for corn laws can never be established.

Of tithes, as an impediment to the progress of agri- culture, I have never been able to take the usual view. It has, I think, never been proved that they operate in this way, otherwise than by an error and prejudice of the farmer. In whatever manner tithes may be taken, rent is generally proportional to their amount. Were this not

the case, could it be considered as wise or politic to refuse an additional profit, because a part of that addition will be deducted as a remuneration for the services of another? A great deal of unnecessary abuse has been lavished on Tithes; and if we deduct the impolicy of the system in its relation to personal feelings and ecclesiastical security, (a question unconnected with agricultural prosperity,) and admit the existence of honesty and intelligence in the agriculturist, no impediment, from this cause, need be found to the progress of cultivation and improvement. Mr. FINDLATER, in his Survey of Peebleshire, endeavours to prove, that, under the system of tithes, the farmer is better off, and more capable of conducting improvements, than if they did not exist. In taking his lease, he makes allowance for the possible exaction of the whole tithe, and will, therefore, find himself easier under the moderate composition which the clergy generally find it convenient to accept from their parishioners, than if he were subject to the pressure of a rack rent. On other bases, I am ready to admit the necessity of an alteration. The mischief of the existing system is too evident; and after the investigation of several able writers, it does not seem doubtful that an equivalent might be found, satisfactory to all parties. The approbation of the Board of Agriculture, and of the Bath and West of England Society, has marked the labours of Mr. WILLIS and Mr. BENETT, whose Essays deserve the perusal of those interested in the commutation. If it be considered by others, that an obstacle to improvement is found in the laws relating to tithes, it behoves such men

to petition against their continuance, and to adduce the proofs of injury, which are hitherto wanting.

That some revision of the Game Laws is necessary to the protection of agriculture has never been denied, though the difficulties which attend such alteration are fully perceived. The mischief and loss occasioned by hunting are very injurious to the individual and the nation. "The "winter corn in wet situations, and turnips in all, are "much damaged by the horses; the fences are broken, "and gates left open, by which all kinds of trespasses "are occasioned." The woful experience of every farmer can point out the succession of injuries, to which he is subjected by this lawful invasion of private property, and by the extensive depredations of hares and rabbits. The saving of the quantity, annually destroyed by this pernicious license alone, might go a great way towards supplying an amount equal to our whole past importations.

It is thought that an amelioration of the law relative to Estates in Tail and under trust is necessary for the advancement of agriculture. Nearly the same observation may be made on these laws, as on the tithe system. Self-interest prescribes that every man should make the most of his actual means; and, in the instance of primogeniture, a wise man generally would not refuse to make a greatly increased profit of his estate by the expenditure of some capital, because his eldest son is to inherit it. An obligation to expend an annual sum would not improve the matter, and would scarcely be justified under our free Constitution. In other cases, some such obligation might be beneficial. The inattention of many of those, who hold in trust, and the

miserable and unproductive state of many endowments, shew the necessity of an enquiry into the laws, which relate to this head.

With regard to Enclosures, whatever may be thought as to the propriety of cultivating with grain every species of land, which may be considered as waste; whether it be true, according to the opinion of certain writers, that the "furor" of cultivating wastes has occasioned a profuse and lavish expenditure of labour and manure, and that, when all the land already enclosed is profitably managed, it will then be time enough to inclose and cultivate wastes; one thing is certain,—that a free power to dispose of capital in the way which shall be deemed most advantageous by the possessor, is one of the fundamental rights of individuals, as it is the basis of national wealth and opulence. So long as an impediment exists to such a facility of application either on waste land, or any other mode of investment, a fatal difficulty lies in the way of improvement. "Shall a few petty fees, or the private emolument of any "man, (says Mr. WILLIS in his Prize Essay,) be a paramount consideration to the existence of the people?" So narrow a policy cannot be reprobated too strongly.

Government has, in some respects, the power of removing the ignorance and prejudices, which distinguish the English farmer from his northern countrymen. Of all the causes, which operate against an adequate production of corn, none is to be compared with this. From a want of general information, the mind becomes contracted and obstinate; and from the want of particular knowledge, judgment has no field of exercise. Such, however,

even according to the decision of their most liberal and enlightened friends, are the wants of a large portion of our agriculturists. Need I again refer to very copious authorities, or painfully recall to recollection examples, which strongly confirm these positions? That without any infringement of our constitutional liberty, and without any necessity for awakening the jealousy of those, who are disposed to watch over our national purity, Government may interfere in the matter of education, is but too distinctly proved in the laws relating to the learning of trades in most parts of Europe. That, for the benefit of agriculture, they may do much, is even proved by this instance of excessive interference. Unfortunately, too, such a measure is the more necessary, as the unskilfulness of agriculturists, being more sanctioned by custom, and less within the view of those who consume or reward, and having relation to an article, which must, at all events, be purchased, does not, as certainly as in trades and manufactures, produce its own punishment. To attempt, in this place, to lay down any plan for communicating so necessary a species of instruction, would exceed all due bounds. Something like the Veterinary Colleges in France might be established in different counties; and the general principles of agriculture might be taught to those only, who had received the elements of education, if not in ordinary schools, at least in those admirable institutions extending by LANCASTER and BELL. With landlords it might rest to exclude tenants, who had neglected the opportunities of such an education.

If it be advisable and necessary to protect the farmer, by excluding foreign corn; upon what principle is the unlimited importation of foreign wool permitted? Why is a competition, destructive of all enterprise and experiment, in an article of vast expense, sanctioned by the Legislature? If to our total home growth of wool the foreign importation bears, as is true, a trifling proportion, it bears a very large proportion to our growth of *fine wool*, and an infinitely greater proportion than the foreign corn, which is imported, bears to that which is raised at home. Why, again, is an injurious partiality shewn in the unlimited permission to import trefoil, clover, and various other seeds?

Among the laws which are obnoxious, by impeding the agricultural power of the country, may, in a lower degree, be placed that regulation which limits the number of horses, and the weight of load for summer and winter. On this and some other minor inconveniences, time, however, will not allow us to dwell.

If any single measure has a tendency to render the kingdom independent, it may, without hesitation, be said to be in the power of landed proprietors, by the universal extension, and an improvement in the system, of leases. The miserable deficiency, which, in this respect, still exists, is strikingly evinced by the Parliamentary documents. We learn that, in many counties, leases are unknown, and that it is the practice of surveyors not to recommend them, or else that they are granted but for very short and insufficient periods. After the voluminous arguments, which have been held on both sides of the question, and

the most convincing proof that has been adduced in favour of a long term, and a comparatively unrestricted covenant, and after the personal experience of some of the wisest and best men in the kingdom, it must appear unnecessary to dwell upon this subject, or notice the questionable evidence of any single witness, who asserts the contrary positions. To all such as may be interested in the subject, I earnestly recommend the perusal of Mr. LOUDON's incomparable Essay on increasing the Rental of England, and Mr. WILLIS's Prize Essay. The former, in his usual argumentative manner, seems to set the question at rest. Leases are granted on the obvious principle, that the best mode of insuring the invention and prosecution of the most advantageous measures, is such an arrangement, as shall confer on those who are to execute those measures, sufficient personal interest therein. The lessee of land, to benefit himself, must first expend a considerable sum in manure and cultivation: and as the effects of this husbandry extend to several crops, hence, a number of seasons, necessary to admit the growth of those crops, are requisite to reimburse him for his trouble, expense, and outlay of capital. From fifteen to twenty years seem to be the term most generally applicable and approved. The objections, which have been urged against a comparatively unrestricted lease, exhibit a superficial view of the question, and a confined knowledge of human nature. The practice, too, which has been founded on these objections, is exactly the means of continuing the evil, against which the complaint is made. It has been observed by an enemy to leases, that it is impossible to make restrictions against

neglect. If this be true, and another evil of great magnitude is the consequence, why are compulsory clauses admitted? On the other hand, it has been profoundly remarked by Mr. LOUDON, that "what the tenant does under "a lease with restrictions, he does as a machine, or as a "beast of labour. Restrictions, independently of their "effect on agriculture, by their tendency to prevent reflec- "tion, and the exercise of judgment, must eventually influ- "ence the moral conduct of the lower orders of the state. "Wherever reflection is prevented by the constitution of "things, information must be shallow on every subject; "since the first excitement to thought, as to action, is "self-interest. He that has grown old in a system of farm- "ing, which necessarily excluded thought, will neglect "accidental advantages, because not within his reach, and "permanent improvements, because not included in his "practice. Originally deprived of the power, he, at last, "loses the inclination to change. Without having recourse "to any other obstacle, the want of equitable leases is "sufficient to account for every defect in English agri- "culture." That there should be a restrictive clause extending to the three last years of a lease, is admitted by all parties. This seems a sufficient security, that no injury can be sustained by the landlord on the renewal of his lease, and through a succession of leases. The present conduct of many landlords is an attempt to contravene the first principles of human nature and human action. While they are materially injuring their country, by preventing the full effect of its productive industry, they are placing an effectual bar in the way of that mental progress

from which still more important individual and national advantages would ultimately flow. At all events, compulsory clauses proceed upon the principle, that the tenant is an insufficient cultivator, that the knowledge of the landlord (and very frequently of his attorney,) is universal and infallible, that the existing system of husbandry is incapable of improvement, and that improvements should never be adopted.

Nearly the same observations apply to the subject of Large and Small Farms. So far as my own opinion goes, after an attentive enquiry, I cannot but heartily concur with those, who consider the subdivision of land among a number of diminutive tenants as highly prejudicial to improvement, and a measure ill calculated to obtain any of the possible benefits of a higher cultivation. The circumstances, that the occupiers of large farms must be men of larger capital, and that the expense of cultivation is much less considerable, should, in the present times, be, of themselves, decisive of the question. After the able investigation of this subject by Mr. A. YOUNG, Mr. LOUDON, Mr. WILLIS, and others, there cannot be a doubt in the mind of any unprejudiced person, that "there is no investment "of agricultural capital proportionally so beneficial in "direct production, as the transfer of several small ill-cul-"tivated farms into the occupation of a man, whose capital "enables him to introduce improvements." The choice of sufficient and able tenants is, indeed, at the present moment, the paramount duty of the landed proprietors of this country. The existing race may, generally speaking, be said to be inadequate to the necessities of the times.

The impolicy of a neglect in such choice cannot be too strongly reprobated, or too frequently represented. "An "assize ought to be held on the judgement of the farmer, "and the capital he is able to command." To this attention is wholly owing the wonderful advance of Norfolk and Northumberland, and "the unrivalled culture of "Suffolk;" and, without such an attention, the independence of the country will never be secured. Where talent and capital go together, as is usually the case, a given breadth of land will be cultivated at less than half the expense that was formerly bestowed upon it. That the country possesses a sufficient capital for its own independence, cannot be doubted. When Mr. PITT remarked, that the idleness of the country would ultimately be its ruin, he overlooked an important cause of that idleness, in the facility of investment created by the funding system, which he carried so far beyond his predecessors. One of the best consequences, which would result to the nation from some reduction in the national debt, would be the necessity under which it places many owners of capital, to apply it to direct sources of production. As, during the unsettled state which must follow this long period of warfare, and the equivocal peace which may follow, some commercial capital will also, probably, remain in the market, a prospect presents itself, that there may be found tenants capable of bestowing a sufficient cultivation; and that proprietors themselves may, in more numerous instances, dedicate their time and means to the improvement of their own estates. At all events, landlords will follow a safe rule, in always preferring a substantial tenant,

at a lower rent, to a mere speculator, who makes a higher and excessive offer.

Though much has been done by the spirited and well-directed exertions of many intelligent landlords, much more remains to be done, in setting the example of economical improvement. The landlord is often too easily disposed to flatter the prejudices and obstinacy of his bailiff, or his labourers; and to abandon improvement, because it interferes with his own indolent habits, or requires a kind of combat. It will be in vain to look for the independence of the country, under such feelings and conduct; feelings, which sacrifice the general benefit, on the frivolous pretext of preserving peace; and conduct, which, if universal, would, at once, arrest the progress of national prosperity. Energy and firmness are invariably requisite to the attainment of every new and difficult object. Those gentlemen, whom I have described, would do well to employ husbandmen from the improved counties of England, or the still more improved and docile Scotland. The habits, which might be learned from the natives of the latter country, would be found servicable in every county of the kingdom. Even among those, who are best inclined to adopt improvements, example is wanted, more than precept. Its efficacy cannot be doubted, and the experiment is well worth a trial. Landholders have, also, individually and collectively, much in their power, from the publication and circulation of the knowledge of modern improvements among their tenantry and labourers, from the ease, with which lesser societies of competition might every where be established, and from the expenditure of a little

more capital in the improvement of houses, particularly of fold-yards, and in the erection of threshing machines. They have it in their power to encourage the settlement of competent mechanics within a certain range of district, and thus remove a serious impediment to the acquisition of implements adapted to improved systems. The landed proprietor has, indeed, much in his power; and, till his best efforts have been used, he cannot be admitted to have any claim to relief in a season of difficulty. Even in this class, that spirit and intelligence must become general, which is now confined to certain great and prominent examples, before we can hope for a right and sufficient use of the talents, with which nature has liberally endowed us.

Under the removal of numerous obstacles to the successful progress of agricultural improvement, permitted by the Legislature and the landed interest, we might rationally hope that the worst impediments would no longer prevent the attainment of a superiority, which we do not now possess.

It would, at present, be in vain to attempt to enumerate the several means of increasing the amount, and improving the quality, of produce, and of diminishing the expense of cultivation, which are not adopted by the tenantry of the country. Ask the best friends of the British farmer, (I have already alluded to the enquiry,) why we are so far behind other countries, and why grain and other produce is so dear? It will be answered, because, in agriculture, there are so many prejudices to encounter; because improvements are so long in gaining ground, and so difficult to establish. Consider what has been done in one or two counties of England, and throughout Scotland,

in spite of their natural disadvantages. Read the eloquent rebukes, and observe the consistent practice, of some few enlightened cultivators. Look at the defective implements of husbandry still in general use, though their deficiency has been proved by repeated comparative trials. Observe the superfluous number of horses and oxen, the waste of labour in winnowing, threshing, milking of cows, and various other agricultural operations. Calculate the loss from injudicious rotations, unserviceable fallows, hedge-wastes, grass lands; from neglect of weeding, from ignorance of the nature, application, and preservation of manures, and from insufficient fences. From this country travel with the patriotic Sir JOHN SINCLAIR into Flanders, and see how much the best of us have still to learn from our Flemish neighbours. Enquire, with this gentleman, whether the cause of high price of grain in England may not, without any reference to corn restrictions, be found in the difference of system generally pursued in the two countries; and whether, by borrowing some useful practices from abroad, grain might not be afforded at a cheap rate at home. The whole of this author's treatise is so well deserving of study, that I am unwilling to abridge it, yet cannot help dwelling on some of its recommendations. Can it be a moment doubted, that, when the question is how we shall raise an independent supply of bread corn for a growing population, the total abandonment of fallows is a measure of primary necessity; when it is proved, to all such as can understand proof, that the great object for which fallows are adopted, can be effected without losing the crop of one year, and without the con-

sequent necessity of raising the price of corn, in order to indemnify the farmer: when this is proved, can it, I say, be doubted, that the annual cultivation of 2,200,000 fallow acres in England, and 200,000 in Scotland, will, at once, put an end to all agricultural distresses? To this may be added, that the produce of wheat after a fallow is only at the rate of 12½, and after rape or colsat 13½; and that the latter crop is less liable to mildew. It is, also, by general experience found, that the system without fallows, even on strong land, at the same time that it furnishes abundant surplus of manure beyond its own expenditure, retains the fields in as high a state of fertility, exacts but a moderate degree of attention, and requires neither any extraordinary expense nor hazadous combination. After the proof of these points, shall there be found an individual, sufficiently strong in his own conceit, to oppose so beneficial an innovation? How important is the fact, that two crops may be raised in the same year on the same land; a measure considered not only advantageous, but absolutely necessary, in the best agricultural district in Europe. How excellent a discovery, that the diseases of grain, the principal sources of scarcity in England, may be prevented by careful selection of the best and ripest grain, by frequent change of seed, by using the seed of the year, and the application of certain well-known preparations! What an accession of power is gained by the established fact, that liquid manure produces a third more effect, than that which is spread on the surface; and how gratifying a confirmation is the Flemish practice, of the benefits of the system of soiling so judiciously adopted

by Mr. CURWEN, and so generally neglected in Great Britain! The increase of the quantity and power of manure, which, under this system, is never exposed to the atmosphere, is an incalculable source of abundance and profit. By the introduction of the flax husbandry alone, an excellent preparation for wheat, the farmer would be enabled to sell his grain at a cheaper rate, and, by the employment of Dutch ashes, to secure abundant crops of clover and wheat, and avoid the destruction occasioned by the wireworm. By means of the *binot*, one ploughing, at an expense of 10s. to 12s. per acre, is saved, and a most valuable addition is made to our implements of husbandry.

It is to be hoped, that a manual, accessible to every farmer in the kingdom, will be prepared, containing these and other admitted improvements, of universal application; in order that, as is the case in districts of the greatest agricultural prosperity, the British farmer may learn to consider the sale or the price of grain as a secondary object, and cease to be dependent, as at present, on an article so inconsiderable among those valuable crops, which the land, in due rotation, might produce. Above all things, let the farmer become acquainted with the demands of the country, and his own power; and beware of involving himself in difficulties, like those of the present year, while at the same time he fatally obstructs the progress of national independence.

After all, should the present inferior race of farmers resume their natural station in society, or, from want of capital and inability to change their habits, emigrate, like their countrymen in the Highlands, the benefit, in a

national point of view, would be incalculable. A new and more docile race would spring up in the South as well as in the North, and every species of desirable improvement would be introduced, with facility and good humour.

The labourer, as I have already noticed, has also his share in the obstacles, which oppose the general improvement. It is not too much to say, that he alone has it in his power to make the country independent. Were the use of potatoes adopted with us, as with the Irish, whose physical vigour and beauty are so well known, we might, from the day of their adoption, become an exporting country. Every one who has seen (and the author has had some advantages in seeing through a large part of Europe) the superior abundance and variety of food, which are in use in those countries, British as well as Continental, where wheat does not constitute the main article of the cottager's diet, will lament the particular as well as public loss, which results from such a system. The incontrovertible fact, that, in the most sterile districts of this country, there is greater comfort and plenty among the poor, and a comparative want of dependence on poor's-rates, will satisfy the most decided sceptic as to the real service, which is conveyed in the above recommendation. Much more morality and correct feeling will be disseminated, when the honest earnings of industry are paid in an honest way, and the obligation to ask alms is not enforced by the contracted principles of the British farmer.

Among the bad habits of this country, which stand in the way of an independent supply, by occasioning an extravagant consumption of food, and a waste of the best land,

may be reckoned the vast number of horses kept, as well for agriculture, as for pleasure. 1,800,000 Horses in Great-Britain and Ireland are supported, on a moderate calculation, at an expense of 16,200,000l. That nearly half of those employed for agricultural purposes might be dispensed with, on the adoption of better ploughs, waggons, and carts, has been proved beyond a doubt. It is ascertained, that, by the use of the four-horse plough, "the rent must be diminished not only one pound per "acre, but as much more as will be equal to the profit of "the farmer on this wasteful employment of his capital. "But this is not all. Every well-fed horse consumes the "produce of four acres of land, of medium fertility: so "that at eight acres, which, under good management, "would give food for at least half as many human beings "are thus wantonly sacrificed to the most inexcusable "perversity." The long-pending controversy respecting the comparative merits of oxen and horses seems, in England at least, to be almost finally determined in favour of the former. After twenty-six years incessant endeavours, Lord Somerville has the satisfaction of seeing his Devon oxen gaining ground in the opinion and adoption of the least prejudiced judges; and, in the course of three years, 2800 oxen, for agricultural uses, have been sent into Norfolk alone, under the sanction of Mr. Coke. How much more room will be left for the support of man by this substitution, may be easily imagined. It is not easy to reconcile the difference of opinion and practice, which is still maintained in Scotland; and I leave it to those engaged in the comparative trial to determine, why,

as is declared in an excellent article on Scottish husbandry, in the Edinburgh Review, (Nov. 1814,) "Oxen have been "there laid aside, with very few exceptions, in exact pro- "portion to the progress of modern husbandry."

If half the expensive and useless horses employed for mere purposes of luxury were diminished, the saving to the country would be very great; and if a quadruple tax were laid upon them, the gain to the revenue would permit the removal of some burdens on the agricultural and manufacturing classes.

Notwithstanding the evident services which have been done by the various societies of the kingdom, and by many noblemen and gentlemen, in calling forth and rewarding talent, some mischief has undoubtedly resulted from an example of misapplied expense, and what has been termed profuse husbandry. They too often, according to the just observation of Dr. COVENTRY, proceed at an unlimited expense in the tillage and manuring; support unnecessary and extravagant means of labour in servants and stocking; obtain, perhaps, double crops, but those at triple cost; and, with the illusive notions of profit, are betrayed into real, though unheeded, loss. This misapplication has been particularly evident in the continued encouragement to the exhibition of very fat animals, whose peculiar excellence has frequently consisted in the quantity of tallow which they could furnish, without sufficient regard to their amount of available food, in proportion to the expense of keeping.

Among the injurious prejudices of the country must be placed that predilection, common, indeed, to all nations,

for articles of foreign growth; which is too much exemplified in the preference given to foreign wool, though purchased at a higher price, and, as hath been proved by repeated instances of competition, of a quality at least not superior. Of the power to raise such a supply of fine wool at home, no doubt is entertained; or of the increased means of augmenting his capital, which would thus be afforded the British agriculturist. The inconsistency of Government has almost paralysed the efforts of many zealous experimentalists; and the annual expense of foreign purchases, a sum which here, at least, might be most beneficially employed in giving encouragement to a meritorious, expensive, and infant undertaking, at least equals that of procuring foreign corn.

Much might be done by a rational œconomy in the habitual use of bread and flour; by the substitution of iron and stone for wood, in many domestic purposes; and by the increase of manure, from the universal adoption of tiles or slate in the place of thatch. From the application of the nutritious food, which the ocean so abundantly supplies us on every side, and which is now neglected, inconceivable additions would be made to the power of the country; and the means of employing capital with advantage would be greatly increased. At the present hour, half the gifts which benevolent Nature has bestowed upon us, are despised, while, like peevish and puling children, we complain of every trifling and insignificant privation.

Whatever obstructs the flow of commercial and manufacturing capital, may be considered among the obstacles

to the progress of agricultural improvement. "Through "the medium of commerce and manufactures," says Mr. COLQUHOUN, "the national property has acquired a "gradual augmentation, affording collateral aid to agri- "culture, not only by increased consumption of the "productions of the soil, but by the surplus capitals which "have been generated by this species of industry, and "turned to the cultivation and improvement of the land. "In manufactures, the progress has been more rapid than "in agriculture. New improvements and valuable dis- "coveries have given a progressive value to those inesti- "mable establishments, which, for the last 20 years, have "added so much to the national wealth." That this increase of commercial and manufacturing industry may be progressive, is earnestly to be hoped. We shall feel the double blessing in the diminution of the number of unemployed paupers, and the most salutary re-agency in the increased power given to the agriculturist.

The causes, which I have here, and elsewhere, cursorily noticed, seem to be sufficient impediments to the growth of an independent supply of bread corn, without any reference to the necessity for increased restrictions. Many of the principal arguments, indeed, which have been advanced in favour of Corn Laws, fall to the ground, if it can be proved, that a comparatively low price of wheat is consistent with its extended growth, and that, from the impossibility of comprehending all cases without great public injury, no one restricting price can ever be of universal application, or perform the intended service of protection to agriculture. These points, to myself at

least, I have satisfactorily proved. If the expense of cultivation, (a main pretext for restricting laws,) can be diminished one-half, and the produce nearly doubled, the farmer may undoubtedly accumulate capital, though the price of his produce were considerably reduced. I have already twice shewn, that Parliament has virtually thrown out of cultivation all those lands, which, according to the evidence before them, could not be cultivated under 84s. or 96s. We must admit either this, or the unexpected dilemma, that they proceeded to enact a law, upon an evidence which could not be trusted. At best, therefore, under these circumstances, the Corn Laws become nugatory. What extent of injury may result from their adoption, is no part of the present enquiry.

It has been said, that the great sums, which, during the last twenty years, have been paid for foreign corn, have been injurious to our resources, and might have been most profitably expended on the improvement of our own agriculture. This argument has already been so satisfactorily answered by Mr. MALTHUS, and others conversant with the principles of political œconomy, that I shall pass it over with the remark, that it is not quite clear, that such an application of capital to our domestic improvement would have taken place, had no such importations existed. As far as they went, and under the circumstances of the times, they had the effect of lowering the price of corn, (the mischief complained of by the whole agricultural world of the present day,) and nearly as much corn was probably consumed as in former years. Had excessive dearness arisen from the combination of com-

parative scarcity and restricted importation, a far greater œconomy would, probably, have been used, and substitutes adopted for the deficient allowance of corn. Increase of price would, as is evident, in this case, have given the farmer little increase of power. Diminished consumption, in any single article of produce, is, indeed, one of the occurrences, which the advocates for high price have almost universally omitted in their calculations. It should, however, not be overlooked, at a period, when we may unquestionably maintain, that, even under the present state of cultivation, it is not in the nature of things that absolute famine can exist in any part of Europe, and far less in America. If, according to the friends to Corn Laws, importation cannot supply our wants, and must have a natural limit; if, according to Mr. WESTERN, no larger quantities *will* be admitted, and, according to Mr. JACOB, no more *can* be admitted, where is the necessity for additional restrictions? If, again, the price of protection is not attained by new enactments, and it is so easy to raise at home the whole surplus demand, that the increase of a single bushel per acre will amount to more than the whole average importation of the last ten years, what is the benefit of protection?

Nearly allied to the last argument, and equally feeble, is the objection to that clause in the Act of 1815, which permits foreign corn to be at all times warehoused, duty free, and to be applied to the home consumption, whenever, under the existing regulations, such corn shall or may be admissible into the united kingdom. It is argued, that such a permission is peculiarly detrimental to the

agricultural interests, as the capital so employed might otherwise be vested in British grain, and the warehouses filled with the surplus produce of our own growth. This is, indeed, to realize the fable of the golden egg, and, like the anile person there recorded, to give up a small, but substantial, benefit, for the prospect of a larger, but imaginary, good. Can any one occurrence be more distant from probability, than that capital should, under an increased price of domestic produce, take this new direction, when, with every advantage of a cheap commodity at home, it has, in preference, turned to a foreign purchase; and when the comparative cheapness itself, and the prospect of being able to sell to advantage, even under circumstances of delay, gave rise to these particular speculations, and to this very expenditure of capital?

Another ground, however, is taken; and it is considered essential to the prosperity of trade and manufactures, that the farmer should be prosperous. This is certainly very considerate, and unquestionably true; but, as it has never been proved that restricted importation is essentially necessary to the success of the farmer, I shall dismiss the argument with one remark. According to the most authentic information which we can obtain, the advocates for the Corn Laws have wonderfully overrated the numerical importance of the agricultural classes. Mr. Colquhoun estimates the new property annually created in Great-Britain and Ireland by 17,096,803 persons, at £430,521,372; of which, agriculture and mines together occupy a population of 6,129,142 persons, or rather more than one-third, and produce £107,246,795, or not quite

one-fourth; while commerce and manufactures, with 7,071,989 persons, produce annually £183,908,352. The remainder is from other classes, totally unconnected with either. So that, admitting the full force of the argument, we may well doubt, whether the agricultural class be as necessary to trade, manufactures, and commerce, as these are indispensable to the highest prosperity of agriculture. At all events, the comparative smallness of the agricultural class could not occasion so extensive a ruin to the whole class of inland traders, as hath been emphatically portended. A decisive proof of the fallacy of this assertion may be seen in the Gazettes of several years past; from which it appears, that, during the height of agricultural prosperity, the amount of bankruptcy among these inland traders was unexampled, while, in these late years of complaint (1814), the occurrence has been comparatively more rare, and the proportion has been gradually diminishing. If the farmer was so capable of assisting this class, why, in the time of his wealth, did he permit such ruin? If his prosperity is so essential to their welfare, why have there been fewer distresses, since he has complained of being undone?

Two other important considerations remain,—the necessity of Corn Laws for the revenue, and "the change in the "measure of value on the weight of a large national debt."

If, by misfortune or loss, any particular branch of the community should diminish its consumption of many exciseable articles, or should be prevented from paying the direct taxes required for the service of the state, while no corresponding increase of power was given

to any other class, and no equivalent was discovered, an injurious defalcation must evidently take place. If, however, it be true, that diminished expenditure, and increase of produce, will, without the assistance of Corn Laws, enable the farmer to cultivate with profit and advantage, there is no reason why his consumption should be diminished, or the direct taxes, perhaps, not paid. If, too, by any beneficial influence of low price on manufactures, (and some trifling influence is admitted,) or by the increased power of the holders of stock, and the possessors of fixed incomes, the Customs and Excise be somewhat extended, and the consumption of taxed articles be, as is highly probable, somewhat augmented; if, by the possible invention of substitutes, the taxes may be removed from this unfortunate class, or, in consequence of a diminished national demand, be rendered unnecessary; or, lastly, if, by a fall in the price of corn and labour, and such commodities as are influenced by their prices, the annual expenditure itself be, in the same proportion, diminished; Corn Laws cannot be necessary in order to carry on the business of the nation. But supposing, with all the writers and orators in favour of the Corn Laws, that, in consequence of the failure and removal of many of these poor and inferior farmers, room is made for solid and sufficient tenants, what injury is done to the revenue? Either the farmers have, or they have not, failed. In either case, the revenue will be undiminished. Against any mischief, which can accrue to the revenue from a moderate reduction of rents, as there is no just apprehension of such an evil, I think it unnecessary to make any provision.

Mr. MALTHUS's argument in favour of the increase of restrictions, drawn from the state of the currency, is founded on the general fall of prices, which must take place in consequence of the rise in the value of paper on a return to cash payments, and the great check to industry, which such a fall must occasion. If this improbable case were to occur, how, in the abstract, it could operate as a check to industry is not very evident; since, the fall being universal, and pervading every article of consumption and expense, though we are nominally poorer, our real power is the same as before. So far, however, the argument is totally unconnected with any necessity for restrictions. How far a real fall may be compensated; how far the real wealth of the country may be increased by increase of quantity of produce, I have already considered.

Of all the arguments in favour of Corn Laws, that which considers it a national injury to benefit the public creditor, appears, at first sight, the most extraordinary. Though they are small in number, and though their interests may not be so evidently interwoven with the welfare of the state as those of the landholder and the labouring classes of the community, still they are an important class; and before a benefit is refused them, a strong case of injury to those other classes should be clearly and incontrovertibly established. As such an injury cannot, in my opinion, be made out, and as much more than an equivalent will be found in the widely extending influence and power of the stockholder, I cannot consider this argument as available, nor can I admit that this class is benefited unfairly at the expense of others. "If," says Mr. COLQUHOUN,

"that energy, which is generated by the circulating pro-
"perty, now extending to more than thirty-three millions
"a year, paid quarterly to perhaps 900,000 public credi-
"tors, should no longer exist, agriculture would experience
"a severe shock. Trade and manufactures would be para-
"lised. The ruin of a very large proportion of the public
"creditors would extend to all ranks of the community.
"The demand for labour, upon which the poor in all
"countries depend for subsistence, would no longer exist
"to any extent, since that proportion of the community
"who were public creditors, and who, with their families
"and dependents, may be estimated at five millions of
"individuals, would have no means of support. The
"circulation of thirty-three millions, independent of the
"Bank and East-India Dividends, and many other public
"Companies, at present gives rise to many times their
"value in the produce of labour, by which an increase of
"the national revenue, or new property, is obtained an-
"nually, to the amount, upon a moderate computation, of
"one hundred and sixty-five millions." So much for the importance of the public annuitant to the agriculturist, and all other classes of the community. If his ruin would, however, entail so much and such widely reaching injury; may not his prosperity, his increased power, casually produce some proportionate benefit? As to the equity of the case, admitting that some injury might occur to the landholder and labourer, why should it be unfair in the stockholder, whose receipts have been stationary, and whose power of capital has been so frequently depressed, to avail himself of the accidental benefits arising out of a

new distribution of property? The utmost that can be urged against him is that he has his turn of prosperity. What, however, has Government to do in the business; government, whose province is not to secure to any class of its subjects a particular rate of profits? Their contract could not virtually exclude any possible conditions of improvement, any more than it could engage to make up any losses, which might arise in the transfer of property. If, too, the fall in the revenue of the industrious classes and of the landholder be only nominal, if corn and all other commodities fall in proportion, as is supposed by the case, they would not suffer to the assumed extent, even with the same amount of taxes. If, with an income of 20l., 5l. must be deducted for taxes, a power of 15l. still remains to me. If my nominal 20l. fall $\frac{1}{2}$, or to 10l., from which 5l. must still be deducted, 5l. only remain. But this being of *real* double value is equal to a power of 10l. So that there is a *real* diminution of $\frac{1}{3}$ not $\frac{1}{4}$ as the common argument assumes. The stockholders, and persons of fixed salaries, have also their taxes to pay as before. They had also a power of 15l. They still have 20l., from which 5l. are deducted, leaving 15l., which is now equal to 30l., or an increase of $\frac{1}{2}$. This transfer will not, however, occasion an unproductive accumulation, but will extend itself beneficially on all sides, and correct any evils, which it might, at first sight, seem to entail. The supposed case, however, cannot occur. War cannot last for ever, and war expenses must cease. If the case does occur, prices will not fall, and the imaginary mischief corrects itself. The fall of one-half is

greater than the average will probably be; and it must not be forgotten that, by œconomy and various other means, the landholder, and industrious classes of society, have still much in their power, which was never in the power of the generality of stockholders. Their well-being does not lie in the price of corn or other commodities, but in "their own prudential habits." The supposed extreme case would, in fact, be no more unfair, than the fluctuations arising from the play of interests, which have harassed the annuitant for many years past, and which have been sanctioned, as it were, by government. The present change would only restore the balance, which has long been destroyed by the diminished value of money, increase of prices, and consequent reduced value of his dividends.

To the agriculturist, the price of corn, as the price of stock to the stockholder, would, generally speaking, with common patience, redress itself. It is true, that accidental and natural increase of demand, from the circumstances of war, and a population advancing beyond the means of subsistence, have had an unusual influence in keeping up prices; and it is more to this circumstance, than any other,—a circumstance, which, for reasons already stated, may cease to exist,—that the continued depreciation of the measure of value is attributable. The demand, accidental as well as natural, (by which latter term I mean increase of population, from the increasing employment of productive industry) has raised the price of corn, by increasing competition; and the same demand for an increased circulating medium has given rise to the greatly increased issue

of paper, which has thus suffered a temporary depreciation. That this depreciation must be removed, in order that a natural and salutary action of property may take place, seems a reasonable supposition. That the high price, arising from an excessive paper circulation, has been productive of much mischief, is evident from the daily bankruptcies which take place. "Paper money is become less "plentiful, and credit more scarce, than during last year." The facilities of discount, which the agriculturist enjoyed, and on which he very much depended, have ceased to exist to the same extent. To this cause, certainly much more than to a comparatively free importation of corn, some of the real and sudden difficulties of the farmer may be ascribed.

After all, as the revenue is not supposed to suffer by this case, and the taxes must remain undiminished, it becomes a question respecting the power of landlords alone to suffer a diminution of their rents. As to the labourer, his situation would not be worse, considering the possible œconomy of seven million in rates, and the practice already established, by many agriculturists, of sending him to the poor-house for a portion of his fair wages. It seems, however, almost unnecessary to have entered so much at length into a question relative to a fact, which the proposer himself considers *impossible*, for two reasons; first, because importation will not reduce the price of corn to 50s.; and, secondly, because the necessary fluctuation will occasion dear years, and thus throw us back upon our own resources.

One only view of the argument remains. "The differ- "ence," says Mr. MALTHUS, "between a measure of value

"at sixty compared with eighty is 33⅓ per cent." This "per-centage upon forty millions amounts to a very for- "midable sum. But let us suppose that corn does not "effectually regulate the prices of other commodities; "and making allowance on this account, let us take only "twenty-five, or even twenty, per cent. Twenty per cent. "upon forty millions amounts at once to eight mil- "lions; a sum, which ought to go a considerable way "towards a peace establishment, but which, in the present "case, must go to pay the additional interest of the na- "tional debt, occasioned by the change in the measure of "value." Now, in the first place, admitting the case, the the difference between sixty and eighty is only 25 per cent. or ten millions on forty millions; and, if we reduce this in the same proportion, and for the reasons above given, the difference is only about 15 per cent., (nearly ⅔,) which supposed reduction would be 6,000,000, or less than ⅓ of the proposed peace establishment. The argument supposes, that, of the real wealth of the country, corn (and other commodities as affected by corn) a much larger quantity must be contributed, in order to pay the money interest of the national debt; which is, therefore, increased in proportion to the diminution of the value of corn. Be it so. I have already considered this point in its effects upon the agricultural tenantry, and the landholder, the classes more immediately affected by the change. I have endeavoured to ascertain the injury which would result to the former from the supposed pressure, and to suggest the measures of relief, which naturally offer themselves; while, among the latter, I have wished to distinguish those, upon

whom such pressure ought, under their peculiar circumstances, chiefly, and by inevitable consequence, to fall.

With regard to the Revenue in general, if it be presumed that a defalcation of taxes, must, to the same amount, necessarily follow a reduction of prices, I can only repeat, that such a necessity is not evident. If it be, however, admitted as a probable occurrence, I maintain that benefit might ultimately result, even from this condition. A most beneficial œconomy would become indispensable in all the departments of government; while, a lesson of difficulty might, in other respects, have effects highly salutary to the national interests. At a period, when enormous sums of money are raised with a facility, which, in the anticipation, our grandfathers would have believed romantic and impossible, and, when it is become habitual to us to expend, upon foreign powers, millions, as an inducement to them to enter into engagements, under circumstances in which their own interests are peculiarly involved, we have no security, but in the experience of some national difficulties, against a lavish expenditure, and an irregular and partial assessment. But in the account of this loss of revenue, a loss calculated entirely upon the price arising out of the new relation of peace, are we to admit no abatement in the expenditure of the State itself, from the mere fact of reduced prices? Are we to overlook the first benefit of our new situation, when applied to its most extensive and valuable object? Are we to allow no possible reduction in a time of peace, and no possible equivalent for any supposed loss, if we deduct from the terrible power of paying

ninety millions in 1815, the expected peace establishment of 1816?

If, however, as has been maintained by many members of both Houses, and by many friends to the Corn Laws without doors, the price of protection will never be attained by this act of the Legislature, all these nice calculations will have been made upon false premises, and, therefore, in vain. In spite of restrictions, the evil will result from our domestic constitutions; and not a single argument will remain in favour of legislative interference.

I have thus endeavoured to shew, that the new duty on the importation of foreign corn is not absolutely and essentially necessary to the independence or greatness of the country. This inference I have deduced from the contradictions of various writers, severally, by themselves, and their discrepancy with each other; from their ignorance or misrepresentations of the facts, on which alone can be founded a true judgment of the subject in question; from an impartial consideration of those facts themselves, as drawn from the only authentic sources; from the strong analogies, derived from the general experience of the ages which are past; and from a conviction of the evident incompetency of the late Act, to secure the end which it proposes, and its tendency, if effectual, to inflict on the country much greater evils than that, against which it professes to guard.

If I have omitted any important arguments, have been guilty of any considerable error, or, by my reasoning, have failed to convince my readers, it will be gratifying to me to consider the new pleas which, I have no doubt,

may be urged by so many intelligent friends to restrictions. If these appear of weight, I shall, upon a future occasion, adopt, without hesitation, the conclusions to which they lead. If they appear untenable, I must be excused for adhering to what I conceive to be the truth, even at the risk of displeasing those, whose approbation I am desirous of obtaining.

FINIS.

TABLE I.

1812. Date. (1.)	Quarters For. Wheat Imported. (2)	Av. Price. (3)	Qu. Loaf. (4)	1813. Date. (1)	Quarters For. Wheat Imported. (2)	Av. Price. (3)	Qu. Loaf. (4)
		s. d.	d.			s. d.	d.
Jan. 4		106 7	17½	Jan. 2		119 10	18½
11		105 11	17	9	800	118 8	18½
18		105 11	17	16	850	118 9	18½
24		104 8	16¾	23		121 9	18¼
Feb. 1		104 0	15⅝	30		120 5	18½
8		103 8	16	Feb. 6		120 7	18½
15		105 1	16¼	13		120 5	18½
22		106 2	16¼	20		119 2	18⅓
29		107 0	16⅝	27		119 9	18½
March 7		108 8	17	March 2		120 5	18¾
14		110 4	17⅛	13		121 2	18½
21		113 1	18	20		112 8	18½
28		117 7	18¾	27	220	122 11	18¾
April 8		122 4	18⅝	April 3	6	122 2	18½
15		123 3	18¼	10		121 10	18½
22		126 11	18½	17		119 11	18⅓
29		129 5	18½	24	379	119 7	18½
May 6		130 8	18½	May 1	9,805	119 2	18½
9		132 4	18½	8	14,860	118 3	18½
16		133 7	18½	15	4,795	117 5	18½
23		132 10	18½	22	4,416	117 4	18½
30		133 1	18½	29	7,955	117 1	18⅝
June 6		132 3	18½	June 5	9,172	117 3	18½
13		132 5	19	12	1,8032	118 5	18½
20		133 10	19¾	19	23,552	117 10	18½
27		137 1	20	26	3,774	114 7	18½
July 4		140 9	20	July 3	2,615	116 3	18½
11		144 5	20	10	13 425	115 11	18½
18		146 0	20	17	10,809	116 5	18½
25		146 11	20	24	1,483	116 1	18½
Aug. 1		148 0	20	31	215	116 7	18½
8		152 3	20	Aug. 7	12,305	115 9	18½
15		155 0	20	14	2,565	114 4	18½
22		154 6	20	21	7,080	112 0	17
29		151 8	20	28	2 322	107 11	17
Sept. 5		149 3	20	Sept. 4	20,355	103 4	15½
12		141 2	20	11	3,865	100 2	15½
19		141 2	20	18	3,130	98 11	15½
26		123 0	20¼	25	12,120	98 1	15½
Oct. 3		117 10	19½	Oct. 2	22,515	96 1	15½
10		112 4	18¼	9	900	94 11	14¾
17		110 1	18½	16	1,100	93 4	14¾
24		111 11	18⅝	23	200	93 5	14¾
31		115 11	18½	30		91 10	14
Nov. 7		120 1	18¾	Nov. 6	11,156	90 0	14
14		122 8	18¾	13	6,475	87 5	13½
21		121 11	18⅝	20	1,040	85 1	12½
28		121 5	18½	27	3,050	82 4	12½
Dec. 5		121 5	18½	Dec. 4		77 9	11
12		120 10	18½	11		72 7	11
19		121 0	18⅝	18	4,455	73 6	11
26		120 7	18½	25	1,510	75 10	11
				Jan. 1	817	76 7	11
Average		125 : 7	18½		245,663	108 : 1	16

1814. Date. (1)	Quarters For. Corn Imported. (2)	Sacks For. Flour. (3)	Av. Price. (4)	Qn. Loaf. (5)
			s. d.	d.
Jan. 8	200		76 9	12½
15	1,200		78 6	12⅝
22	70		79 6	13¼
29			79 8	13¼
Feb. 5	95		79 3	13¼
12	88		78 5	13½
19	20		76 9	12⅝
26			74 10	12½
Mar. 5			74 9	12½
12			76 6	12⅝
19			78 1	13
26			79 9	13¼
April 2			79 4	12⅝
9			77 10	12½
16	60		76 8	11⅞
23	150		73 5	11⅞
30	402		71 1	11⅜
May 7	1,407		69 6	11⅜
14	250		68 10	11⅜
21	2,360		69 4	11⅜
28	1,640		71 0	11⅜
June 4	8,458		71 3	11⅜
11	2,470		70 7	11⅜
18			69 2	11⅜
25			68 5	11⅜
July 2	3,275		67 9	11⅜
9			67 4	11⅛
16	1,031		67 8	11⅜
23	120		68 10	11⅜
30	13,380		70 2	11⅜
Aug. 6	2,633		70 7	11⅜
13	2,170		71 7	12
20	1,945		74 8	13
27	7,081		78 0	13½
Sept. 3	27,540		80 5	13½
10	23,243		79 0	13½
17	10,687		77 7	13½
24	31 300		75 6	13½
Oct. 1	22,809	2100	77 3	13½
8	45,420	1100	76 2	13½
15	18 840	1140	75 0	13
22	16,098	4136	74 2	13¼
29	8,581	1100	74 4	13
Nov. 5	52 007	500	74 8	12⅞
12	21 279		73 7	12⅝
19	7.835	1500	73 2	12½
26	11.025	2854	72 9	12¼
Dec. 3	17,413	1210	72 9	12¼
10	9,437		72 4	11⅞
17	16.960	3705	70 9	11⅞
24	11,184	500	68 6	11⅜
31	35.500	96	67 6	11⅜
	437,737	19,941	73 : 10½	12¼

1815. Date. (1)	Quarters For. Corn Imported. (2)	Sacks For. Flour. (3)	Av. Price. (4)	Qn. Loaf. (5)
			s. d.	d.
Jan. 7	15,017	2240	65 8	11
14	8,105	135	63 4	11
21	6,505	1100	60 8	11
28	6,730	800	58 9	10⅝
Feb. 4	6,497	1560	59 5	11
11	5,865	1920	61 4	11⅛
18	1,410	1200	64 3	11⅜
25	3,665	180	67 8	11⅞
Mar. 4	4,650	350	68 8	11½
11	7.960		67 9	11⅜
18	1,100		66 5	11⅛
25	1,420		66 2	11⅛
April 1	6,340		67 6	12
8	2.902		70 5	12⅛
15	5,080		71 9	12⅛
22			70 11	11⅞
29	300		70 2	11⅜
May 6			70 4	11⅜
13			70 8	11⅜
20			70 6	11⅜
27			70 0	11⅜
June 2	600		70 0	11⅜
10	600		69 6	11⅜
17	10		68 11	11⅜
24			68 6	11⅛
July 1			67 10	11⅜
8			67 7	11⅛
15			67 6	11⅛
22			67 8	11⅜
29			68 7	11⅛
Aug. 5			69 10	11⅝
12			69 7	11⅜
19			68 6	11⅛
26			67 9	11½
Sept. 2	700		66 5	11
9			65 4	11
16			64 0	11
23			62 2	11
	85,136	9,485	67 0	11½

Averdge Prices.

	s. d.
Jan. 4, 1812	125 7
1813	108 1
1814	73 10½
June 24, 1815	67 2

93 : 8 ; per annum.

TABLE II.

SHEWING THE AVERAGE WAGES IN TWELVE COUNTIES.

Bedfordshire.	*Cumberland.*	*Huntingdonshire.*	*Hertfordshire.*
1796	1792—1795	1792—1796	1795
8s.	7s. 10½d.	7s. 8d.	8s. 6½d.
Leicestershire.	*Lincolnshire.*	*Norfolk.*	*Northamptonshire.*
1792—4, 5	1792—6	1792—5	1792—5
10s. 5d.	10s. 9d.	8s. 10d.	8s. 10d.
Oxfordshire.	*Suffolk.*	*Sussex.**	*Somersetshire.*
1795	1792—6	1793	1795
9s. 7d.	10s. 3¼d.	9s. 3d.	7s. 10d.

Total Average, 1792—1796, 8s. 11¼d.

* From Mr. A. YOUNG, and excluding Parish Allowance

TABLE III.

Shewing the Proportion of Bread to the Weekly Expenses of Agricultural Labourers.

BEDFORDSHIRE.

Family of 4 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	7 Persons.	8 Persons.
1795	1795	1795	1795	1795
Total Expense.				
9s. 10d.	13s. 10½d.	13s. 9¾d.	16s. 5½d.	12s. 7½d.
Bread.				
4s. 0d.	7s. 6d.	7s. 6d.	9s. 0d.	8s. 0d.

CUMBERLAND.

4 Persons.	4 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	7 Persons.	8 Persons.
1792	1794	1793	1795	1795	1795
9s. 3¼d.	9s. 10¾d.	8s. 10¾d.	9s. 4¾d.	12s. 5¼d.	13s. 10¼d.
3s. 4d.	3s. 6d.	4s. 1d.	4s. 6d.	5s. 0d.	5s. 6d.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

4 Persons.	4 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	3 Persons.	8 Persons.
1792	1795—6	1793	1795—6	1795	1795
9s. 10½d.	10s. 0d.	8s. 1¾d.	10s. 6d.	8s. 2½d.	11s. 7¼d.
3s. 10d.	2s. 5¼d.	5s. 10d.	4s. 10½d.	2s. 7½d.	5s. 2d.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

4 Persons.	4 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	7 Persons.	8 Persons.
1795	1795	1795	1795	1795	1795
16s. 3¼d.	19s. 9d.	1l. 3s. 0½d.	1l. 5s. 1½d.	1l. 6s. 8¼d.	1l. 14s. 2¼d.
6s. 9d.	8s. 1d.	9s. 4d.	10s. 5d.	11s. 6d.	12s. 7d.

TABLE III. *(Continued.)*

LEICESTERSHIRE.

Family of 8 Persons.	4 Persons.	4 Persons.	4 Persons.	4 Persons.	8 Persons.
1795	1792	1794	1792	1794	1795
Total Expense. 19s. 6d.	10s. 8½d.	12s. 1¼d.	14s. 9½d.	15s. 5d.	1l. 1s. 0¾d.*
Bread. 11s. 2d.	3s. 9d.	4s. 6d.	6s. 0d.	6s. 6d.	9s. 8d.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

4 Persons.	4 Persons.	8 Persons.	4 Persons.	4 Persons.	6 Per.	6 Per.
1792	1794	1796	1793	1794	1793	1795
10s. 8¼d.	12s. 5d.	19s. 11d.	9s. 1¾d.	9s. 6¼d.	10s. 11½d.	11s. 4½d.
2s. 8d.	3s. 5½d.	6s. 7d.	3s. 6d.	3s. 9d.	5s.	6s. 6d.

NORFOLK.

4 Persons.	4 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	7 Persons.	8 Persons.
1792	1794	1793	1795	1795	1795
7s. 1¼d.	7s. 8¾d.	10s. 6¾d.	14s. 0¾d.	16s. 3¼d.	19s. 0½d.
2s. 10d.	3s. 4d.	4s. 7½d.	8s. 0d.	9s. 4d.	10s. 8d.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

4 Persons.	4 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	3 Persons.	4 Per.	7 Per.
1792	1793	1794	1795	1795	1795	1795
11s. 6½d.	12s. 5½d.	15s. 10¾d.	14s. 1d.	10s. 5d.	11s. 7½d.	12s. 1¼d.
2s. 9d.	3s. 0d.	6s. 0d.	7s. 0d.	3s. 0d.	5s.	7s. 6d.

OXFORDSHIRE.

4 Persons.	6 Persons.	8 Persons.	4 Persons.	5 Persons.	8 Persons.
1795	1795	1795	1795.	1795	1795
12s. 11d.	12s. 4d.	1l. 3s. 1¾d.	11s. 5¼d.	12s. 9d.	17s. 10¼d.
4s. 8d.	7s. 0d.	9s. 4d.	6s. 6d.	8s. 0d.	14s. 0d.

* An extraordinary expenditure from the birth of twins.

TABLE III. *(Continued.)*

SUFFOLK.

Family of 4 Persons.	4 Persons.	8 Persons.	6 Persons.	7 Persons.	8 Persons.
1792	1794	1796	1796	1795	1796
Total Expense.					
11s. 8¾d.	12s. 10¼d.	1l. 0s. 7½d.	18s. 1¼d.	19s. 0d.	1l. 3s. 0½d.
Bread.					
3s. 0d.	3s. 9d.	14s. 8½d.	9s. 9d.	11s. 4½d.	15s. 10½d.

SUSSEX.

8 Persons.	3 Persons.	6 Persons.	6 Persons.	7 Persons.	3 Persons.
1793	1793	1793	1793	1793	1793
16s. 5d.	6s. 11½d.	14s. 1½d.	14s. 4½d.	15s. 6¾d.	9s. 0d.
6s. 8d.	1s. 11d.	5s. 9d.	5s. 9d.	6s. 2¼d.	2s. 10½d.

SOMERSETSHIRE

7 Persons.	6 Persons.	5 Persons.	4 Persons.
1795	1795	1795	1795
16s. 1d.	14s. 1¾d.	14s. 1¾d.	11s. 0½d.
5s. 6½d.	5s. 1d.	5s. 3d.	4s. 4d.

YORKSHIRE.

5 Persons.
1795
11s. 10¼d.
4s. 9d.

TABLE IV.

SHEWING THE AVERAGE WEEKLY EXPENSES OF EACH INDIVIDUAL IN THE LABOURER'S FAMILY, AND THE AVERAGE WEEKLY EXPENSE OF BREAD FOR EACH PERSON.

	Average Weekly Expense of Bread per Person.	General Average Expense.
	s. d.	s. d.
Bedfordshire	1 4	2 5½
Cumberland	0 8¾	1 9¾
Huntingdonshire	0 9½	1 10½
Hertfordshire	1 8	4 1¾
Leicestershire	1 3½	2 11
Lincolnshire	0 10½	2 4
Norfolk	1 1½	2 1½
Northamptonshire ...	1 0	2 7¼
Oxfordshire	1 5	2 7
Suffolk	1 6¾	2 10
Somersetshire	0 11	2 6
Yorkshire	0 11¼	2 2¼
	13 7¾	£1 10 4¾
Average of Bread in Twelve Counties - -	1s. 1⅛d.	2s. 0¼d. Average Weekly Expense in Twelve Counties.

TABLE V.

EXPORT AND IMPORT.

	Total.	Qrs. Wheat and Flour.	Excess of Importation. Quarters.	Days' Consumption.
1811	Import	292,038	194,273	$6\frac{3}{4}$
	Export	97,765		
1812	Import	246,376	200,051	$6\frac{5}{6}$
	Export	46,325		
1813	Import	341,846	270,520	$9\frac{1}{7}$
	Exp. (supposed)	71,326		
1814	Import	634,585	525,632	$17\frac{1}{2}$
	Export	108,953		
1815 (to Oct. 5.)	Import	192,242	76,790	$2\frac{1}{2}$
	Export	115,512		
				$42\frac{17}{30}\frac{6}{6}$

Average of five last years $8\frac{2}{5}$ days.

NOTES.

Preface. THE returns of importation, up to July 5, 1814, were published in the Appendix to the Commons' Report. The whole amount of importation for 1814 was not ordered till Feb. 16, 1815; and of that for 1815, not till February 7, 1816. Previously, however, to the publication of these documents, numerous works appeared, of which the object was to prove the mischiefs of the existing regulations, from the quantities of foreign corn brought into the market. From imaginary data the most important consequences were deduced; and the confidence, with which they were announced, was, as usual, in exact proportion to the inaccuracy of the original premises. Mr. A. YOUNG has given a list of forty-one Essays on this subject, and the titles of many others appear in the Journals and Magazines. Where I have omitted to avail myself of arguments or opinions, which might have deserved a particular notice, the neglect must be ascribed to my ignorance of their existence, or my inability to obtain the works, in which they are contained. With higher feelings of regret, I cannot but notice here a proof of the very slow diffusion of agricultural knowledge, in the circumstance of my having been unable to obtain for reference, in the year 1815, in a large and populous city, the seat of a numerous Agricultural Society, the centre of communication for the West of England, a single copy of the Transactions of the Board of

Agriculture subsequently to 1806! How much valuable knowledge may thus, for years past, have been lost to a large portion of the kingdom. I speak to the fact alone.

Page 1. The aversion to what is contemptuously called theory, as if it were set in opposition to practice, is so discreditable to the taste and understanding, that we may wonder at the avowal of such a feeling, in these days of science and civilization. It cannot, however, be concealed, that many advocates for restrictions have expressed much indignation at the abstract manner in which this important question has been treated by friends, as well as opposers, of the Act. Lord Sheffield, in his Letter on the Corn Laws, classing his objections to theories with his aversion to petitions, and his disapprobation of all modifications of restriction, thinks nothing can be more unreasonable than the first, more disgusting than the second, or more injudicious than the third. Mr. A. YOUNG, in his "Enquiry," says, that, "upon a review "of the various publications which have appeared, a careful reader will "reject every page of these theories, as utterly unworthy attention." And Mr. SIMPSON remarks, that "never question was so lost in meta-"physics." I will only observe, that it is no proof of wisdom to attach to facts a value, which is unconnected with their necessity to the establishment of general principles; and that it is no proof of candour, to refuse the test of principles admitted by long experience as generally true, and practically applicable.

Page 9. Our modern theorists will find a serviceable allusion to the subject of rent, and our modern landlords a valuable instance of policy and humanity, at a period almost veiled from our sight in the darkness of antiquity. HERODOTUS informs us (*Euterpe*) that SESOSTRIS regularly divided the lands of Ægypt, and that his revenues arose out of the annual rents paid by each individual. By a specific clause, every tenant was permitted to make a representation to the king, of the losses he might suffer by the inundations of the Nile. Particular officers were appointed to ascertain the injury, which had been sustained, and to provide that every man's rent should be regulated by his ability to pay it.

Page 9, l. 25. See ADAM SMITH's Tables, vol. i. p. 298; also "a "Plain View of the Corn Question." I have retained the original prices in A. SMITH, as sufficiently establishing the fact of a regular fall, though not indicating any exact relation to the prices of the present day. According to the prices in the Eton Books, the averages of the six last centuries were as follow:

Centuries.	£.	s.	d.
13th - - - - - -	2	10	2½
14th - - - - - -	1	13	6½
15th - - - - - -	0	18	1½
16th - - - - - -	1	7	9¼
17th - - - - - -	2	8	5
18th - - - - - -	2	6	2½

The last average is made up from the Eton Books, Sir F. EDEN, and the averages of England.

Page 17. It may appear superfluous to remind the reader, that the real price is the quantity of labour, or of other articles, which may be commanded, or purchased, by any commodity; and that the money price is the amount in money for which a commodity will sell.

Page 28. Mr. A. YOUNG has favoured us with a story in order to exhibit the effects which the restoration of BONAPARTE is reported to have had upon the labourers in several parts of the kingdom. It appears that they received the news with unequivocal expressions of approbation. By way of companion, I offer him the following particulars. A Gentleman, calling, at a somewhat late hour, upon a friend, in a well-known inn in a large city of the West of England, was surprised at hearing much noise and riot in an adjoining room. On enquiring of the waiter as to its cause, he was answered, "It is "only the farmers rejoicing at BONAPARTE's return, and drinking his "health in an additional bottle."

Page 30. Mr. BURKE states it as a rare occurrence, that the most prosperous farmer (in his days) ever made 12 or 15 per cent. on his

capital; an opinion, which is, however, restricted to such as rent from 300 to 400 acres of land.

Page 30, *l.* 4. Farmer's Journal, 328.

Page 30, *l.* 15. SIMPSON'S Letters, p. 53. Mr. SIMPSON may safely be called a *violent* advocate for the landowners and cultivators, in whose favour he advances numerous arguments, printed in italics, and supported, chiefly, by vague declamation, and injurious abuse of the other classes of the community. Of some of Mr. SIMPSON'S facts I have readily availed myself.

Page 31, *l.* 14. Mr. NEWNHAM'S "Review of the Evidence" is an admirable deduction, in favour of the other classes of the community, out of the mouths of the witnesses themselves. Here they have justice, more than they desire.

Page 31, *l.* 26. Mr. BROUGHAM, in his comprehensive Speech on the Causes of the Agricultural Distresses, (April 9, 1816,) considers it as established, that during some years past, an increase of produce has taken place beyond the demand. It is maintained, that 2,000,000 acres have been brought into service since the year 1792; which, at 3 quarters per acre, give an annually increased amount of corn to the extent of 6,000,000 quarters. Now as, from 1800 to 1811, there was an addition of 2,000,000 to the population, and only 2,000,000 qrs. of wheat are required for their subsistence, there is supposed to be an annual surplus of 4,000,000 quarters above the demand. I may remark, however, in the first place, that it is not quite certain that the whole of this surface has been applied to the cultivation of wheat: secondly, that this land is not, or should not be, cropped with wheat oftener than once in three or four years; thirdly, that the amount of produce is probably overrated; fourthly, that the increase of population between the years 1792 and 1801 is not admitted into the calculation. It is unnecessary to shew how great a reduction these considerations will make in the relative amount of produce. Mr.

CURWEN in his speech, (March 20, 1816,) denies the fact of any "sur-"plus produce having existed during the last thirty years." The distress, he says, "originated from the immense extent of importation, "joined to *the deficiency of crops*. In consequence of this, prices fell." In the fifth volume of the Transactions of the Board of Agriculture, Mr. PITT says, that for twenty-five years previously to 1806, the consumption of grain had exceeded its growth by the annual produce of 200,000 acres.

Page 32, *l.* 25. It may be proper to state in this place, that, in reducing the cwts. to qrs. I have considered the quarter of foreign wheat as equal to 3½ cwts. of flour; which, I believe, is also the estimate at the Custom-House. To reduce cwts. to qrs. it is, then, only necessary to multiply the cwts. by 2, and divide by 7 (halves). To convert quarters into cwts. multiply the qrs. by 7, and divide by 2. A greater difficulty attends the reduction of sacks of flour into quarters; the foreign sack of flour not being always of one regular weight, or, if it be, that weight not corresponding with our cwt., which is 112lbs., or with the English sack of flour, which is always 2½ cwts. or 280lbs. The irregularity of weight of the foreign sacks of flour renders it necessary to reduce them to our standard either of cwts. or sacks. In my calculations, I have considered the sack as equal to 2½ cwts. The process of reduction, then, will be, to multiply the sacks by 5, and divide by 2, (halves,) which is the amount in cwts. Reduce these as above.

Page 34, *l.* 24. See Mr. COLQUHOUN's work on the Wealth, Power, and Resources of the British Empire. Such enlarged views cannot fail of being serviceable to the heart and understanding. We are placed on an eminence inaccessible to the mists of prejudice.

"Despicere unde queas alios, passimq; videre
"Errare, atq; viam palantes quærere vitæ."

The hum of personal feelings cannot be heard so high.

Page 36, *l.* 1. The inefficacy of the Corn Laws having been proved by the experience of twelve months, other possible causes for the agricultural distresses have forcibly demanded attention. It is curious to observe how soon the original reputed cause has been forgotten, and how many other natural sources of mischief have at length been opened.

Page 36, *l.* 13. Mr. MALTHUS has so completely proved this point, in his "Observations," that it is impossible for a reader, however candid, to attach any importance to the arguments employed in his "Grounds," or to explain so palpable a change of sentiments.

Page 36, *l.* 14. For the rise of farmers, see Mr. WILLIS's Prize Essay, Transactions of the Board of Agriculture.

Page 37, *l.* 28. See "Considerations on the Corn Bill," an honest and sensible pamphlet in favour of the Bill. See Trans. B. A. i. 246, for the value of economical habits in the farmer. To these the Abbé MANN, in a great measure, ascribes the prosperity of the Flemish husbandry.

Page 39, *l.* 13. That the distress of the farmer has been partial, I can assert on positive knowledge, and on an authority which, if I were allowed to publish it, would not be questioned. This fact is proved, first, by the full payment of taxes in many parishes adjoining those that have paid nothing of the property tax for 1815, while those now most in arrear have, in the best years, and from the commencement of the tax, been in habitual arrear. In some places, the farmers have refused to pay, in the hope that Parliament would grant them retrospective relief. To these general observations may be added, secondly, that many instances may be adduced in various counties, in which landlords have received the whole of their rents due, and others in which the tenants only ask for time. There are, also, instances, very well authenticated, of farms being taken with avidity at their original, and even at increased, rents. We learn (in the Farmer's Journal

388,) that in January 1815, the Cumberland farmers gave higher prices than ever.

Page 39, *l.* 25. SIMPSON's Letters, p. 40, 42.

Page 40, *l.* 8. Report of Select Committee, page 181.

Page 43, *l.* 8. Letter to Lord SHEFFIELD, by THOMAS BROUGHTON, Esq.

Line 15. One advocate for restrictions says, "if restrictions take "place, the property tax is taken off, and rent lowered to the amount "of the property tax, wheat will never reach 80s., except after a failing "crop." The resolutions of the Wiltshire Society (March 20, 1816) declare, "that farm produce will be cheaper without importation, than "with it."

Page 44, *l.* 25. Objections Refuted, p. 14, 15.

Page 47, *l.* 1. By a mistake, these words are assigned to Mr. SPENCE, which belong to an author in the Farmer's Journal. Mr. S. expresses himself thus: "When thousands of farmers, who, but twelve "months ago, were living in prosperity, are utterly unable to raise "money for their taxes merely; and tens of thousands, to discharge "them, are forced to sell their produce at less than one half of its "prime cost." P. 2. This millenary process, or *argumentum millenarium*, has been continued without intermission to the present day. I observe in the Farmer's Journal, 445, that, on the 14th of March, 1816, "thousands of farmers are, even now, hesitating whether to "throw up their farms," or not.

Page 50, *l.* 1. No one has more forcibly pointed out the mischiefs arising from the ordinary system of farming, than Mr. A. YOUNG, in his Farmer's Guide. He there shews the injury which the individual and the country sustains from the frequent practice, in farmers, of

taking much larger farms than they are able to cultivate; an act of imprudence, which, in case of accidents, inevitably occasions their ruin. See more, vol. i. chap. 14, &c. Mr. CLOSE, indeed, says, "farmers want skill, not capital;" a point in which Mr. WILLIS agrees with him. See many valuable observations, Trans. B. A. iii. 37.

Page 51, *l.* 21. See Enquiry, p. 189.

Page 53, *l.* 1. It is necessary to mention, in this place, that the items, which compose these tables, are given on the authority of the Farmer's Journal, which is understood to be supplied with its information from the weekly entries at the Custom House. The amount of importation is not likely to be under-rated in this publication. I cannot, however, omit the opportunity of contributing my meed of applause to the Editors of this excellent Journal, for the liberal manner in which it is conducted, and the vast mass of useful information which they are the means of circulating through the kingdom. The number of papers, which do credit to the judgement and acquirements of their respective authors, far exceeds that to be met with in any other similar publication.

Page 54, *l.* 13. This allowance of one quarter per annum to each individual was first made by the Author of the Corn Tracts, and has been generally admitted by subsequent authors. It appears that the Romans were formerly allowed five-sixths of an English quarter.

Page 55, *l.* 17. The clamour which has lately been excited by the supposed excessive amount of importation, finds a precedent in the vague assertions and opinions of former times, that our importation amounted to $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ of our consumption; an error, which was pointed out by the Author of the Corn Tracts.

Page 56, *l.* 11. The converse of this proposition, it will be remembered, was asserted by DAVENANT, who, probably, borrowed his observations from GREGORY KING. A deficit of $\frac{1}{10}$ in the har-

vest may, according to these authors, raise the price three times. The calculations, which have been founded on these proportions, are clearly unavailable in any practical view, as the proportions themselves must vary, according to an indefinite and unknown series. The necessity of this rise, or of the diminished price in consequence of a certain excess, cannot be established, so long as the amount of these variations can be diminished by difference of habits, and improved political systems.

Page 57, l. 12. Mr. A. YOUNG, in his Survey of France, remarks, that all great variations in the price of corn are engendered by apprehension. The truth of this general remark has rarely met a more striking confirmation, than during the last two years. We must, however, be cautious in admitting these cases as proofs of the entire want of relation between price and produce.

Page 58. See Commons Report, p. 95, 109, 115, 118, &c.

Page 60, l. 13. Farmer's Journal, 329.

Page 62, l. 20. Report, p. 53, 73, 125, 156.

Page 61, l. 16. On this subject, Mr. A. YOUNG confesses, in his Farmer's Guide, i. 251, "that he feels a crowd of ideas all unsus-"ceptible of calculation, and which, on that account, puzzle him "extremely." Mr. CLARIDGE (Report 41) says, "the generality of "farmers, whom I look upon as men of uncultivated minds, do not "go upon the principle of calculation." See more, BROUGHTON's Question fairly stated, p. 27, 28. It is to be feared, that even the estimates of some principal witnesses display rather a lavish expenditure, than laudable attention to economy.

Page 62, l. 29. Among other instances, Cumberland seems to form an honourable exception. The farmers are fortunate enough to receive a better education than the generality of their brethren,

and their advance in learning has had its best effects in teaching them humility, candour, and economy.—See also Sir F. EDEN, ii. 15, 434.

Page 64. "Those (says Mr. TOLLET, Trans. B. A. iii. 451,) who "know the cautious character of the farmer, and his great antipathy "to what is new, &c.;" and Mr. PROTHEROE (482,) says, "such is "the infatuation of prejudice, that the farmers continue the practice "of shallow ploughing with invincible obstinacy." See, also, iv. 432, and numberless other places. It is, indeed, needless to add testimony to testimony in proof of a point, which is the least doubtful of any under consideration.

Page 64, *l.* 15. Evidence before the Lords, 18.

Page 65. On the effects of education in rooting out prejudices, and inducing every valuable feeling and habit, see Lord CASTLEREAGH'S speech (April, 1816), in which he contrasts the present state of Ireland with that of Scotland; and endeavours to shew, that the improvement of the former must, as in the latter instance, be expected, not from legislative interference, but from the gradual education of its inhabitants.

Page 68, *l.* 28. It appears from Mr. A. YOUNG, (Trans. B. A. iii. 169, &c.) that, in 1800, the high prices of wheat immensely lessened its consumption. He adds, "the temporary *evil of high prices* "will cause such a variety of means of preventing a return of it, that "if these have the smallest operation, in union with one or two plen-"tiful crops, the reverse to be expected will be distressing." So much for one of the natural effects of high price!

Page 71, *l.* 13, 14. "The general lowness of the price of grain, "and ultimately of all other articles." Objections Refuted, p. 43; Enquiry, p. 198.

Page 77, l. 13. See Trans. B. A. iii. p. 41—43, for a very striking example, detailed by Mr. ESTCOURT, of the admirable effects of a contrary system. Mr. CLOSE remarks, that, in any attempt to better the condition of the industrious labourer, "the first and most difficult "task will be, to raise him to his former station in society."

Page 78. Sir F. EDEN, whose accuracy and extensive information are well known, speaking of the situation of the labourer twenty years ago, says, among other things, "in many very small cottages "I have seen both a clock and a barometer. There are few labourers "that do not possess that elegant convenience, a watch." iii. 4. I leave it to Mr. DRIVER, and the advocates for high price, to measure his present circumstances by this account.

Page 78, l. 19. The average price of labour in England in the year 1790 was, according to the tables in the Trans. B. A., 9s. 3d.; being in winter 7s., in summer 8s. 6½d., and in harvest 12s. 2¾d. The average price in 1804 was 13s. 3d.; in winter 9s. 10½d., in summer 11s. 11d., and in harvest 17s. 11½d.

Page 79, l. 26. Farmer's Journal, No. 404.

Page 80. l. 11. The advocates for high price have chosen a singular period in proof of the accuracy of their opinions. To point out the increased dependence of the labouring class of society on parochial assistance, and the enormous increase of poor-rates, at a period when agricultural industry has been in constant demand, is a novel, and not quite convincing, mode of illustrating their prosperity.

Page 85, l. 1. In "The Policy of a Restriction in the Importation "of Corn, by Philalethes," some of these contradictions are pointed out.

Page 90, l. 12. In his Enquiry, Mr. A. YOUNG endeavours to shew, from data which he considers as sufficient, "that, during the "last twenty-two years, prices have not risen in England so much as

"in various other countries; and that the rise of rents in countries "which possess neither fabrics nor commerce, has been more con- "siderable than in England; that, therefore, the inhabitants of this "country cannot, with reason, complain." This general fact of a rise of prices is, in reality, of little importance, and, in its particular application, is liable to a very injurious perversion. It will have a highly injurious effect upon our reasonings, if it induce us to exclude the consideration of that decreasing rate, according to which the possession of capital, skill, energy, and those complicated advantages, which have already acted in lowering price, might still operate to the same effect, in a country like Great-Britain, under the natural circumstances of a tolerably secure peace. With regard to high price itself, it may be remarked, that, if the principle is of any value, 80os. may as well be adopted as 80s. in all the reasonings which are employed on the subject. There is, indeed, no necessary limit to advance in price by the seller, nor to forbearance on the part of the purchaser.

Page 93, *l.* 7. See Trans. B. A. iii. 351. "A boiling grey pea is, "in point of weight and price, the most nourishing food a poor man "can have."

Page 93, *l.* 17. By Sir J. M. POORE's experiments, ¼ a rood, or ⅛ of an acre, produced, for several years, a weight of potatoes equal to the support of a family of four persons. Trans. B. A. iv. 360, &c. Mr. A. YOUNG, and Lord WINCHILSEA have proposed excellent plans for the maintenance and payment of rural labourers, which would, probably, prevent their having recourse to the poor-rates. Trans. B. A.; Farmer's Journal, 347, &c.

Page 96, *l.* 9. Mr JACOB and others strangely mistake the remedy proposed, when they imagine that the reduction of rent alone is to save the small farmer. "If rents were reduced to one half their present "amount, all taxes continuing as now, the farmer could not cultivate "corn, &c." I can no where find this case assumed by any opponent to the bill. "Rent," says Lord SHEFFIELD, "is unimportant, when

"compared with poor-rates, tithes, &c." Well! be it so! Let landlords settle their amount of reduction, and Government, of those to whom it may belong, adjust the remaining difference.

Page 96, *l.* 24. "Shall the proprietors" (asks Mr. JACOB, in a humorous way,) "be *compelled* to abate that portion of the rent, which "some of the more enlightened think too much?" Yes! compelled —compelled as the members of modern communities are compelled, —by their own interests. Formerly, indeed, men were slaves to men. In these times they acknowledge, as masters, only their own necessities.

Page 97, *l.* 20. Mr. CURWEN, Trans. B. A. v. 147, says, "it is, "doubtless, the interest of *every* member of the community to have "*grain cheap*, and subject to as little fluctuation in price as possible. "As a matter of speculation, I should contend, that the landed interest "had ultimately *more* to apprehend from the *high* prices of grain, than "the manufacturer."

Mr. SPENCE, "Objections refuted," p. 7, contends, that, considering the trifling amount of importation in the time of ADAM SMITH, it is not to be wondered at that he should have fallen into the mistake of defending the freedom of trade, even with regard to corn. "If," says he, "Dr. SMITH could have contemplated a state of things, such as we "witness, when, instead of the importation being only 23,728 quarters, "*of all kinds of grain*, as it was in his time, it has been often, for the "last six months, twice as much weekly, and at a time too, when our "produce is sufficient for our supply, instead of stating that our farmers "can have nothing to fear from the freest importation, he would have "most earnestly deprecated it." As Mr. SPENCE's calculations are generally inaccurate, let us examine this statement. The first edition of the Wealth of Nations was printed in the end of the year 1775, and in the beginning of the year 1776; the third edition in 1783 and 1784. Now it appears, by the Tables in the Commons Report, that, in the year 1775, of wheat and wheat flour *alone* were imported 560,988 quarters; and that the exports amounted to 91,037 quarters; leaving a net balance of 479,951 quarters. The whole amount of wheat and

wheat flour imported in 1783, was 584,183 quarters, and the export 51,943 quarters; leaving a net balance of 532,240 quarters. In 1784, the whole importation of wheat and wheat flour was 216,947, and the export 89,288; leaving 127,659 quarters. It also happens, that A. SMITH has himself informed us, that, in his reasonings upon "the "present state of things," he means always the state in which they were during the year 1783, and the beginning of 1784. Admitting, then, his own assertion, as more likely to be correct than Mr. SPENCE's conjectures, the net importation of wheat during those two years was 659,899 quarters, or per annum 329,949 quarters. Now, in direct opposition to Mr. SPENCE's bold and sweeping assertions, it will not be overlooked, that the net importation of 1783 actually exceeded, by 58,551 quarters, that of 1814, to which he so triumphantly refers us; and that the net importation of 1783 and 1784 exceeded that of 1814 and 1815, by 57,537 quarters. Neither will it be forgotten, that the population in A. SMITH's time was somewhat lower than that of these last years; and, therefore, that the excess bore a vastly greater proportion to the whole consumption, than it would in these days. Upon how extraordinary a perversion of facts has Mr. SPENCE, then, founded his conjectural argument, as to the incapacity of A. SMITH to form a right estimate on the effects of a free trade in corn! To give him, however, the full benefit of his argument, let us take an average of ten years, from 1775 to 1784 inclusive. The whole import of wheat and wheat flour in that period was 1,971,928 quarters; and the whole export 1,366,181 quarters; leaving a net total of 605,747 quarters, or an annual amount of 60,574 $\frac{7}{10}$ quarters for a population of about $\frac{1}{5}$ less than at present. It appears, then, that, omitting this necessary deduction, the quantity assumed, as the basis of Mr. SPENCE's argument, for the whole amount of imported grain *of all kinds* is less, by 36,846 quarters, than the actual import of wheat and wheat flour alone. This argument will appear still more trifling, if we take the excess of importation from 1765 to 1774 inclusive.

Page 98, *l.* 9. Farmer's Journal; No. 347.

Page 99, *l.* 25. Mr. A. YOUNG (Farmer's Journal, 347) considers as a most satisfactory proof that rents are not too high, the circumstance, that there is an abundance of wastes inclosed, but not cultivated, "Rents," says he, "are not so high as to drive capital to the most "beneficial employment:" which is saying, in other words, "the "expenses of cultivation are already so great, that the farmer is unable "to cultivate inclosed waste lands. Make him, however, still poorer "by increasing his rent, and you increase his power of cultivation." Admirable reasoning!

It appears that the rise of rents, from 1790 to 1804, was 39$\frac{6}{7}$ per cent.

Page 103, *l.* 11. "Answer to Lord SHEFFIELD," p. 15.

Page 103, *l.* 16. Report, p. 54.

Page 104. Mr. COLQUHOUN (p. 53) observes, "through this me-"dium (of manufactures) the national property has acquired a gradual "augmentation, affording collateral aid to agriculture, not only by "increased consumption of the productions of the soil, but by the "surplus capitals which have been generated by this species of industry, "and turned to the cultivation and improvement of the land, which "has also acquired additional impetus from the capitals of individuals "returning yearly from the East-Indies, and other countries, invested "in landed property." Mr. WILLIS, also, in his Essay, says, "Another "circumstance has lately thrown an immense capital into agricultural "pursuits, and that is, the unusual checks and restrictions on our "commerce. Much capital has been withdrawn in disgust from com-"mercial speculations, and employed in those of land. This also may "contribute to rise lands to enormous prices. Merchants become "farmers under the present embarrassment of trade. If the continental "exclusion of our commerce is to continue, the difficulty of finding a "safe resource of employ must, of course, engage the greatest part "in seeking lands to buy and cultivate."

Page 104, *l.* 13. Mr. A. YOUNG, talking of the expenses of cultivation, (Transactions of the Board of Agriculture, vol. iii.) says, "to "all these expenses, if landlords add a considerable rise of rent, while "prices continue high, we shall, by and by, see effects we *little* "*dream of*." This is, to be sure, equivocal enough; but it seems that effects little dreamt of by the farmer have, at length, arrived, and one evident cause is, in this passage, established. See also "Considerations on the Corn Bill," p. 32.

Page 106, *l.* 1. This was written in the summer of 1815, just after the passing of the Corn Bill.

Page 107. See NEWNHAM'S "Review."

Page 116, *l.* 21. In justice to the Continental governments, and to my own argument, it must not be omitted, that difficulties in the way of a free export of corn more frequently originate in the prejudices of the people themselves, than in the constituted authorities. This was actually the case in France, at the period when the last restrictions were placed upon export.

Page 117, *l.* 16. The argument for independence in bread corn leads to some curious results. Where would, ultimately, be the surface required for our flocks, our herds, our woods, and other products, conformably to the increased and increasing rate of demand for those commodities? According to this argument, carried to a fair extent, in order to furnish the population with an independent supply of a single article of consumption, the country must, necessarily, become dependent on foreigners for every other article of their wants.

Page 119, *l.* 18, 19. See Lord SHEFFIELD; and a "Country Gentleman," p. 23.

Page 120, *l.* 12. It has been admitted by Mr. MALTHUS, that, "in "some countries possessing a small territory, and consisting chiefly of

"one or two large cities, it can never be made a question, whether or "not they should freely import foreign corn." Grounds, 48. With regard to large nations, the same author has admitted, (Popul. p. 467,) "that England is, undoubtedly, from her insular situation and com- "manding navy, the most likely to form an exception to this rule" of necessary independence. Mr. TOOKE, however, says, (Trans. B. A. vol. iii. p. 417,) "It seldom happens that a powerful and pros- "perous state can ever, to any great extent, export the necessaries of "life. The contrary, in general, happens, and flourishing communities "become dependent on other nations for the supply of their daily "bread." I myself entertain little doubt that England might, to a certain extent, become "dependent," not only with safety, but with advantage to herself and her neighbours. Of the truth of Mr. MALTHUS's first position all history gives evidence. To omit the trite examples of Venice and Holland, with what name do our early associations and our matured judgment lead us to connect the most exquisite and refined ideas of greatness? Do we not recall the con- secrated form of Athens, at a period when the paralysing influence of an absolute democracy had not as yet destroyed the native energies of her vigorous population? What period in the history of the world shall we select as distinguished for the most eminent men in the sciences, and in the arts? To the atchievements of what æra shall we at once assign an imperishable immortality? Can it be doubted, that the fifty years, which intervened between the battle of Salamis, and the commencement of the fatal Peloponnesian war, will be selected as that æra? Attica, however, was dependent on other countries for its supply of bread corn; and the future destruction of the Athenian power, from this dependence, was, in those days, as confidently prognosticated as that of England has been pronounced by the loud predictions of these later times. XENOPHON's Helenica, book vi.; LEUNCL, p. 581.

What, also, shall we say of the Carthaginians? If we must lament the loss of historians, who, from personal acquaintance, bore witness to their high domestic civilization, let us look solely at their naval and military pre-eminence, their extensive conquests by sea and by land. Were they not, at *least*, the rivals of the greatest contemporary nations?

And yet, as we learn from DIODORUS SICULUS, (DIOD. ed. Wess. II. p. 491, xii.) and other writers, the Carthaginians imported corn from Sardinia and Sicily.

Were the days of our QUEEN ELIZABETH glorious? Were those glories connected with any dependence on foreign countries? The whole argument is founded on insufficient premises. It is a stately column without a pedestal.

Page 124, *l.* 14. See NEWNHAM'S "Review."

Page 127, *l.* 13. Let it not be advanced, as one of the great mischiefs of permitting corn to be warehoused, that this license may degenerate into abuse. It is, indeed, asserted, as many other things are asserted, that an immense quantity of corn has, under the cover of law, been smuggled into the country, and has greatly affected prices. This argument is of so intangible and aërial a nature; it appears in so questionable a shape, that I must be excused, at present, for omitting any further notice of it. As to the general position, I can only say, all good things are liable to the same unhappy perversion.

Page 127, *l.* 18. I have already observed, that all our calculations of this kind can but afford an approximation to the truth. We know neither the exact amount of our population at any particular moment, nor the exact demand for corn. As the original supposition of an annual consumption of 12,000,000 quarters of wheat, made by Mr. SPENCE and Mr. JACOB, is probably inaccurate, (see Objections Refuted, p. 36, and Considerations, p. 22,) I have, in Table V., endeavoured to make as minute an estimate, as the nature of the case will admit. The amount of consumption is there calculated upon the supposed annual rate of increase in our population. Supposing our numbers, in 1811, to be 10,488,000, the daily consumption of wheat would be 28,734 quarters. In 1812, 10,645,320 persons would consume per day 29,165 quarters. In 1813, 10,804,999 persons would require every day 29,602 quarters. In 1814, 10,967,072 would consume daily 30,046 quarters; and in 1815, 11,131,577 persons, 30,497

quarters; making the average annual amount of importation, in the last five years, eight days and a fraction; and the importation of 1814 about seventeen days. It must, however, not be overlooked, that, in my calculations, I have omitted the quantities required for seed corn, which have been estimated at an annual addition of 1,400,000 quarters; and will, therefore, considerably reduce the proportion of importation to the necessary daily consumption. Upon this estimate, the daily consumption in 1815 would be 34,333 quarters of corn; and the importation would only equal the demand of about 15½ days.

Page 128. COLQUHOUN, pages 5, 6.

Page 129. Mr. JACOB assumes 1,600,000 quarters as the whole quantity of grain of all descriptions, that could be imported from Flanders. Now by calculation I find, that the amount of imported wheat in the eight years, from 1805 to 1812 inclusive, was 477,140 quarters; and of all other grain, only 11,650; or about $\frac{1}{41}$ of the whole. This I have assumed as the usual proportion, and have deducted it from 1,600,000 quarters. With regard to the northern ports, Germany is rated at 25,000 quarters. As Mr. JACOB's estimate of the capacities of Russia varies from 30,000 to 160,000 quarters, or more, I have ventured, as a safe medium, to take one-half of the latter quantity, and have considered $\frac{6}{7}$ as the admitted proportion of wheat. Poland is set down at 500,000 quarters. For Holland, I have borrowed an average of the two years 1809 and 1810.

Page 131. It must be recollected, that Mr. JACOB himself has supposed Russia capable of a greater produce, and that he has wholly omitted Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and France.

Page 132, *l.* 9. It may safely be asserted, that, situated as we are in regard to the ocean, famine, unless under the visitation of pestilence, might be rendered an almost impossible occurrence, even without the necessity of having recourse to an occasional meal of timber, like the

ancient Hylophages of the Red Sea, or their modern imitators, the Swedes and Laplanders.

Page 137. SIMPSON'S Letters, p. 24.

Page 141, *l.* 1. "State of the Poor," App. III. lxxix.

Page 143, *l.* 22—26. "Observations," p. 27; "Grounds," p. 27.

Page 145, *l.* 12. Mr. WILLIS, whose Essay I had not perused till long after these pages were written, considering the obstacles, which oppose the progress of agricultural improvement, and which render us, in some measure, dependent, very slightly notices the importation of foreign corn. "It only remains," he says, "to rouse ourselves, and "consider, to shake off our inveterate prejudices and habits, which are "our greatest foes. *No means whatever can be devised to reduce our "import of grain*, and produce enough on our own soil, unless the "import is destroyed by the removal of those unfortunate checks that "have given it existence." &c.

Page 146, *l.* 13. Upon the same calculation, on the first of May 1816, there is in England and Wales a population of 11,298,050 persons.

Page 146, *l.* 17. If much of this land is under wheat culture only once in five years, the power is proportionably reduced. See JACOB'S Letter, p. 38.

Page 148, *l.* 5. We must, however, still revert to the principle of a natural balance in the employment of our domestic industry. Mr. MALTHUS says, "If every inch of land in the country were well cul- "tivated, there would be no reason to expect, merely on that account, "that we should have a surplus of corn; that would depend entirely "on the commercial population, and on the direction of capital to agriculture or commerce." See Trans. B. A. v. 309, &c.

Page 149, l. 8. This article is generally attributed to the liberal and intelligent Mr. BARROW. It should be read by every Englishman. See also Experiments on Fir Timber from the Earl of FIFE's forests.

Page 149, l. 22. The diminished cultivation of hemp in this country is a consideration intimately connected with the present question. The difference, which, in a national point of view, is made by the substitution of one article of supposed necessity for another, whose claim cannot be disputed, has never been sufficiently investigated. Before the problem of independence can be fairly solved, an accurate balance must be drawn, between the expense saved, and that incurred, by the present system. According to Lord SOMERVILLE, (WISSETT on Hemp) 140,000 acres of land, at the rate of a ton for somewhat more than three acres, would give more than the annual consumption of the country, amounting to 35,000 tons, independent of what would be required for seed. By the last prices current, I see that Riga hemp is at 42l.—43l. per ton, and Peterſburgh at 40l.—41l. The annual expenditure for hemp, at an average of 42l. is, therefore, 1,470,000l. An important recommendation of the hemp huſbandry is, that it affords much labour in winter, and it would, on this and other accounts, be particularly valuable at the present period. See Trans. B. A. iii. 163, & iv. 187, &c.

Page 150, l. 9. "The present quality of English wheat is so inferior, principally owing to want of proper manure and good cultivation. "The ear of a poor soil is so unproductive of flour, that the weight of "a quarter of English wheat is not more than 31 ſtone, which is ordinarily 35 stone." J. P. SMITH, "Argument," &c. p. 35.—Mr. MALTHUS observes, "that in every instance, where a certain quantity of "dressing and labour, employed to bring new land into cultivation, "would have yielded permanently greater produce if employed upon "old land, both the individual and nation are losers by cultivating the "new land." See Trans. B. A. vi. 296.

Page 150, l. 25. Page 24 and Not.

Page 151. It is generally overlooked in the argument, that, in proportion to the extended cultivation of waste lands, the increased quantity of seed corn which is required, very much augments the annual consumption, and that this circumstance is an additional cause of high price. See some valuable observations, Trans. B. A. iii. 323. Also, p. 70, on Saving in Seed Corn.

Page 152, *l.* 13. "Letter to Mr. WHITBREAD, p. 7 and 37. The sentence in the latter page is, indeed, not very intelligible. I omit many equally vague estimates, proceeding from authorities, which should be less at variance one with another.

Page 153, *l.* 9. "Rich lands will produce more than twice as much "grain as can be obtained from poor soils." See CHAPMAN'S "Ob-"servations on the Corn Laws," p. 18.

Page 154, *l.* 9. Commons' Report, p. 105.

Page 154, *l.* 13. Commons' Report, p. 123.

Page 155, *l.* 1. "Observations by a Country Gentleman."

Page 157, *l.* 7. An author in the Farmer's Journal, No. 354, endeavours to prove that taxation makes corn lower.

Page 157, *l.* 16. A. B. C. Farmer's Journal, p. 328.

Page 157, *l.* 26. Since this was written, a species of retribution has taken place; and Paris, like Carthage of old, has been forced to disgorge the spoils taken from innocent and unoffending nations. However justifiable might have been the plunder of a British museum, a British palace, or even a Prussian arsenal, what had France to do with Holland, and Switzerland, and Italy, and Spain, and Portugal, a large part of Germany, and with Russia? Such wanton and extensive aggression scarcely finds a parallel in the darkest ages of barbarism!

Page 158, *l.* 1. Only half the prophecy in the text has proved correct. Of the ultimate benefits of the repeal Mr. SPENCE entertains the following doubt. "The Property Tax, which, on an average, "does not exceed 2s. 6d. per acre, can be no effectual relief to men "losing 50s." Has any individual asserted that it would afford such relief?

Page 158, *l.* 27. "The melancholy exhibition of one million and "and a half of paupers, with their families, living chiefly on the labours "of others, strongly evinces an error in the present system, since more "than half a million of these degraded individuals are in the vigour of life." Treat. on W. P. and Res. of the B. E. p. 117.

Page 160, *l.* 25. See, among many other publications, "Thoughts "on the Commutation or Abolition of Tithes, by W. CLARK, Esq;" the production of an intelligent and manly writer.

Page 161, *l.* 11. On this important subject, see much excellent reasoning, in the Essay of a Scotch Farmer, (Mr. LOUDON,) published by LONGMAN, 1808, p. 13, &c.

According to the Farmer's Magazine, I. 398, in 1808, nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the lands of England were tithe free, and another fourth in the hands of lay impropriators.

Page 163, *l.* 3. After "head" insert as follows. "The obstruction, "which, by entails, is offered to the beneficial influence of leases, de-"serves the most serious consideration of the Legislature."

Page 163, *l.* 4. In the Trans. B. A. vol. iii. are thirty-one admirable Essays, selected from three or four hundred, which were sent to the Board in answer to their inquiries as to "the best means of converting "certain portions of grass land into tillage, without exhausting the soil; "and returning the same to grass, after a certain period, in an improved "state, or at least without injury."

Page 165, *l.* 1. The resolutions of the various manufacturers, with regard to the proposed restrictions on foreign wools, proceed, universally, upon a *petitio principii*. The question is not, whether, if the whole present supply of foreign wool were excluded, a great injury would arise to the manufacturers, the multitudes of poor they employ, and the country at large; but, whether, under a supposed encouragement, the same amount of produce, of an equally serviceable kind might not be raised at home. A still more serious moral, as well as logical, objection to these resolutions, is, that they assume a proportion of foreign importation, which relates to the whole supply of the material, both coarse and fine, which the country demands. For, though it may be true, that only $\frac{1}{12}$ of the whole consumption has ever been imported, nothing can be more fallacious, than to pretend, that the encouragement proposed by restriction refers to this aggregate amount. The real question is, what proportion do 15,712,517lbs. of imported *fine* wool bear to the whole domestic growth of fine wool, and, therefore, how far is the grower of fine wool affected by the importation. Now, as with gentlemen, who can so misrepresent the point at issue, it might be in vain to attempt the deduction of possibilities from past experience, and equally superfluous to point out the nice distinctions, which constitute the essence of proof; I can only assert, in an unqualified manner, that it has been *proved*, that, under proper management, this country is fully equal to the supply of its own population in the article of fine wool, without any just fear of its deterioration in point of quality, or its interference with other branches of our home manufacture. In days when the prejudices of many centuries have been accumulating, and are confirmed by the habits of scholastic education, we cannot wonder, either that the inestimable blessing of vaccination should have been rejected, with some ridicule, by the first society in Europe, or that British manufacturers should maintain the impossibility of raising fine wool on their own soil. A century hence, neither of these cases will, probably, be believed. In the mean time, advocate as I profess myself to be for freedom of trade, it is my opinion, that one of the few exceptions to the general rule may, perhaps, be found in an infant undertaking, which is proved to be practicable, which requires only a little

assistance in its earliest days, which will afterwards fear no competition, and which, in the interval of its growth, forces no alteration in the uses or habits of domestic industry. The manufacturer, who grounds his petition against restrictions, on the trifling proportion of import to consumption, forgets how much stronger a foundation for the same argument existed with regard to corn, and how totally dissimilar are the two cases. If the amount of wool was only $\frac{1}{12}$, that of wheat in the last five years was only $\frac{1}{45}$.

Since also some impediment to importation would, in the common course of things, act as an encouragement to an increased home growth, it would be very difficult to shew what evil, either to the manufacturer or consumer, could possibly result from having two markets for the raw material.

The assertion, that the fine wools of this country have for several years past uniformly increased in price, is directly contrary to the fact. If it be not so, let the manufacturers, any or all of them, come forward, and publicly offer the fine wool growers in Great-Britain a better price for such wool, than they actually gave before the great increase of prices six or seven years ago. This will be with the country the test of their knowledge and sincerity on this point.

With regard to the effect of restrictions on the export of manufactured goods, it might be wise to allow a drawback; and as to home consumption, there is no fear but that the manufacturers will take very good care of themselves. Of any injury from the export of our coarse wools I entertain no apprehension. The export will cease, as soon as such wool shall, in consequence of the home demand, bear a sufficient price.

The only real and national argument in favour of importation has been omitted by the manufacturers. They have neglected to state the advantages, which result to all countries, from the increased wealth and prosperity of their neighbours; and to enlarge upon the increased power of return, and greater room for exchanges, which are furnished, under an annual expenditure of some millions of pounds sterling.

Page 192, *l.* 13. "Hints regarding the Agricultural State of the "Netherlands;" see particularly p. 85.

Page 173, *l.* 17. If the Island of the Hyperboreans, over against Gaul, which is mentioned by HECATÆUS, and other writers, be really Britain, it appears, that, such was the fertility of the soil, and the temperance of the climate, in those days, that the country annually produced two crops. (DIOD. Wess. lib. ii. 158, &c.)

Page 176, *l.* 7. Edinburgh Review, No. 47, p. 91.

Page 177, *l.* 17. Cited by LOUDON, p. 92.

Page 178, *l.* 19. Mr. DUNCAN, Trans. B. A. iv. 228, gives an instance of a covering to a single farm-house, which required 100 thraves of straw; which, on a moderate computation, would have served for four months as litter for fourteen horses, while feeding in the stable, and might have fertilized three acres of land.

Page 183, *l.* 11. When this Essay was written, the number of bankrupts for the year 1815 could not be ascertained. According to the Monthly Magazine the numbers for the undermentioned years were nearly as follow:

1811 - - - - - - - -	2000
1812 - - - - - - - -	1652
1813 - - - - - - - -	1557
1814 - - - - - - - -	1066

I now find that, in 1815, there were about 1323; which, except in 1814, is the lowest number that has occurred for many years.

Page 186, *l.* 2. The total charge of the debt, Feb. 1, 1816, was 42,149,850*l.* 11*s.* 7¾*d.* The total debt unredeemed, and due to the public creditor, was 792,033,426*l.* 10*s.* 6¾*d.*

Page 189, *l.* 3. It is very fortunate for weaker mortals, that those who consider themselves entitled to the peculiar privilege of conjuring up spirits and chimæras dire, are also provided with a counter-charm, by means of which, after alarming us for a sufficient length of time,

they suddenly, and very unexpectedly, lay them all in the Red Sea. Mr. JACOB, after a most awful representation of the mischiefs, which must result to the revenue from the free importation of corn, concludes by saying, (p. 178,) "it is happy for the community, that such reduc- "tion of price is scarcely within the compass of possibility; each step "of the progress would diminish production, and as productions are "lessened, prices would again rise; thus a check would originate in "the system itself, that would destroy the picture that imagination had "coloured with such brilliant tints!!!"

Printed by Richard Gruttwell,
St. James's-Street, Bath.

00027281

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 July, 2018